Cory on Joey: He should be grateful Ninoy is dead

Story Below, Col. 2

Pinay wife, daughter share tycoon's wealth

PERTH, Australia—More than a decade of bitter public squabbling over the fortune of a dead Australian mining magnate ended yesterday when his powerful daughter and his flamboyant Filipino wife called a halt to their long-running legal battle.

Gina Rinehart, daughter of iron ore magnate Lang Hancock, had been laying

PINAY/ A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Bar examinees: Why punish us for act of few?

By Philip Tubeza

A GROUP of bar examinees from Northern Luzon yesterday asked the Supreme Court to reconsider its decision to schedule another exam on Mercantile Law due to the leakage of test questions during last Sunday's bar exams.

The petitioners said bar examinees should instead be given an average passing

BAR/ A20

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Friday, September 26, 2003 ★★★ 76 pages / 7 sections / vol. 18 / no. 290 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Poll: Mutineers justified

LDP, NPC start talks to unify opposition

By Christine O. Avendaño

LEADERS of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), the biggest opposition party, are seeking to enter into a coalition with other parties like Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's Nationalist People's Coalition for the 2004 polls, but some LDP members are not too keen about an alliance with the NPC.

At the gathering yesterday of the LDP national executive council, party leaders authorized a five-man team led by LDP president Sen. Edgardo Angara to negotiate with "other opposition political parties and like-minded groups for purposes of the May 2004 elections."

In a resolution, the LDP authorized the team to come up with a coalition agreement that would "define the mechanisms and procedures in selecting the coalition candidates for the May 2004 elections."

The five-man team is expected to report to the council on the status of the negotiations on or before Oct.15.

"This is the first of a series of steps that

LDP/ A19

MALACANANG PHOTO

ARRIVING on a cold evening at Newark International Airport in New Jersey, President Macapagal and the First Gentleman receive a warm welcome from Ambassador Albert del Rosario and Permanent Representative to the UN Lauro Baja.

55% support Oakwood uprising

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE MAJORITY of Filipinos believe that the soldiers who staged the July 27 mutiny in Makati City were justified in doing so and that another coup attempt was likely, a Pulse Asia survey showed yesterday.

"The majority opinion, 55 percent, said that these grievances constituted a sufficient reason for the soldiers to rebel against the government," Miranda said at a forum.

The poll of 1,200 people nationwide was conducted between Aug. 28 and Sept. 19, or a month after the mutiny where 300 young officers and soldiers going by the name Magdalo took over the high-end Oakwood Premier serviced apartments to protest alleged corruption in the military and the government.

It showed that the majority of the respondents, 52 percent, believed that restive soldiers still posed a big threat to the government.

According to Prof. Felipe Miranda, Pulse Asia research director, six to seven of 10 survey respondents said the grievances expressed by the Magdalo group were "with basis and justifiable." The grievances included the lack of housing for soldiers and the alleged sale by military officials of arms and ammunition to rebel groups as well as to the bandit group Abu Sayyaf.

Earlier, Malacañang had claimed that the mutiny, which ended peacefully after hours of negotiations between the Magdalo leaders and government representatives led by Roy Cimatu, former Armed Forces chief of staff, was part of a plot to replace the President with a military junta.

The Pulse Asia findings were summa-

POLL/ A19

US Secret Service points gun at Malacañang official

By Volt Contreras

NEW YORK (via PLDT)—This was not an action movie.

A Malacañang official who was helping a broadcast crew install a satellite dish atop the ritzy Waldolf-Astoria for the media coverage of President Macapagal-Arroyo's two-day visit reportedly found himself the target of a gun aimed at him from a US Secret Service helicopter patrolling the New York sky.

Per accounts reaching the Philippine media delegation, Assistant Press Secretary Claro Fernandez was overseeing the setup of Radio-TV Malacañang's satellite dish at around 4 p.m. Wednesday (NY time) on the roof deck of the hotel where Ms Macapagal and her party, who were arriving the next morning, were to be billeted.

The activity apparently alarmed Secret Service personnel deployed in, around and over the hotel, which by then was already housing US President George W. Bush and other world leaders attending the United Nations' 58th General Assembly.

Fernandez and company found themselves being circled by a chopper carrying armed Secret Service agents.

US SECRET/ A19

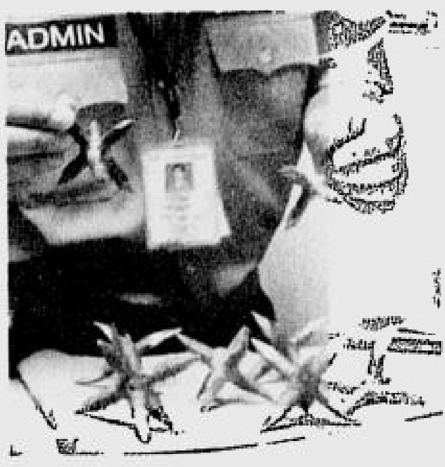
Spike attack stops 39 cars, jams up Edsa

FIRST destabilization and coup plots, and now spike attacks?

Suspected pranksters yesterday scattered iron spikes across the Edsa-Shaw underpass, causing the tires of 39 cars to puncture leading to a massive traffic jam.

The six-pointed spikes, made from welded and sharpened iron bars, were strewn during the morning rush hour

SPIKE/ A19



RUDY ESPERAS

THESE SINISTER spikes incapacitated numerous vehicles on Edsa, stalled rush-hour traffic big time, and wrought havoc on hapless commuters' schedules.

Kris hailed for breaking 'culture of silence' on domestic violence

By Alcuin Papa and TJ Burgonio

COMMENDATIONS have been pouring in for Kris Aquino for her "courage" to openly speak about her experience and "break the Filipino women's culture of silence" on domestic violence.

Inspired by the example of Kris, the police expect that more battered women would now come forward to report cases of abuse.

"For making her tragic story public, Ms Aquino established the grim reality that affects the lives of our Filipino women. She has given a public face to the pervasive issue of violence against women within the context of intimate relationships," said Javata de Dios, chair of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW).

In a statement, Gabriela Women's Party said: "Kris has broken the Filipino women's culture of silence. We admire her courage and we hope more women will learn to fight back against their abusers. Every woman who has been violated or abused must defend her person and dignity, and breaking the silence is a crucial step," Gabriela spokesperson Cristina Palabay said.

Kris Aquino may be one of about 13 women beaten up by their lovers, husbands and live-in partners every day in the country.

According to figures from the Women and

KRIS/ A20

PANALO SI KRIS...TALO SI TSONG !

ABS-CBN whips GMA 7 with Kris' interview

By Marinel R. Cruz

WEDNESDAY'S early evening reality TV starring Kris Aquino reportedly sent ratings zooming for ABS-CBN, leaving its rival network eating dust.

ABS-CBN's "TV Patrol" gar-

ABS-CBN/ A20

Cory on Joey: If Ninoy were alive, he'd be dead...

By Louie C. Camino

"MAGPASALAMAT siya at patay na si Ninoy. Kung buhay pa si Ninoy, patay siya." (He should be grateful Ninoy is dead. If Ninoy were alive, he would be dead.)

Former President Cory Aquino sounded just like any mother, anguished and protective of her violated daughter Kris Aquino, as she talked to ABS-CBN executives and Kris' friends, Cory Vidanes and Deo Edrinal, at her Times Street residence in Quezon City.

The former President and widow of the martyred Sen. Benigno Aquino was provoked into making the statement, which was unlikely coming from one of the world's iconic figures, after Kris' no-holds-barred confession last Wednesday on ABS-CBN's prime time newscast "TV Patrol," according to sources close to the Aquino family.

The youngest of five children, Kris had told "the whole Philippines" that Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez, her live-in paramour for a year and a half, had pointed a gun at her and was an "incurable" womanizer who gave her a sexually transmitted disease.

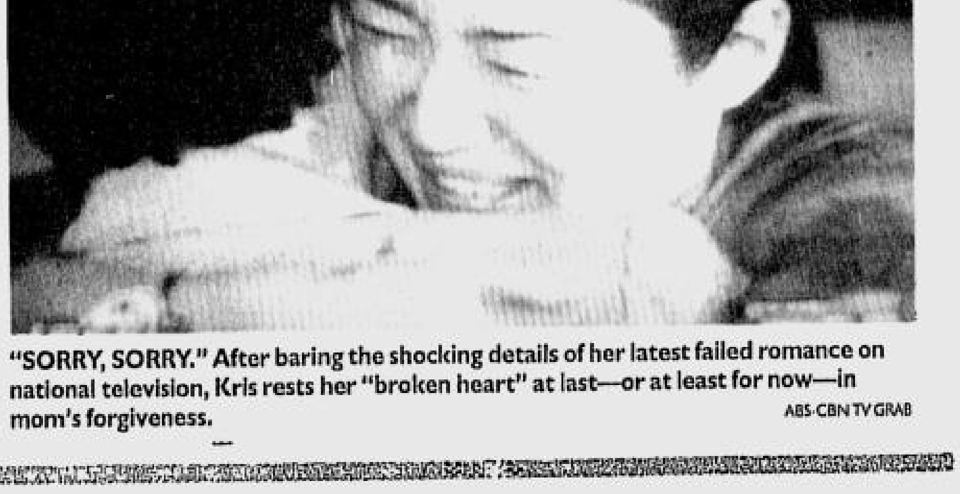
At one point, Kris said on national television that her father had instructed her mother to tell all their prospective sons-in-law that should they tire of their daughters to just return them to the family, and "we will take care of them."

The "TV Patrol" tell-all interview was conducted at Mrs. Aquino's Times Street residence. After the interview, Kris kept on crying, sources who were present told the INQUIRER.

Yesterday, Kris told the INQUIRER that her mother advised her to "use this experience to help others."

Mrs. Aquino also told Kris' friends who were present at the Times Street house to

CORY/ A20



"SORRY, SORRY." After baring the shocking details of her latest failed romance on national television, Kris rests her "broken heart" at last—or at least for now—in mom's forgiveness.

ABS-CBN TV GRAB

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole of Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/09/26/03

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

MILF sets new term for talks

THE LARGEST Muslim rebel group in the Philippines said peace talks with the government will not resume as expected next month unless soldiers pull out of a guerrilla enclave they overran in February.

Government officials insisted the peace process was on track and said the first members of a team of Malaysian-led ceasefire observers were due to arrive soon.

Malaysia, a mainly Muslim country, is again brokering attempts to restart formal talks to end the three-decade separatist conflict.

Mohaqher Iqbal, information committee chief for the Moro Islamic Liberation FronT, said the Muslim rebels would not return to the table unless Manila repositioned troops outside Buliok, for years a major guerrilla zone in a marshy region on the southern island of Mindanao.

"There will be no formal talks if government cannot honor its commitment," Iqbal said, noting that the two sides agreed to the withdrawal of troops from Buliok during a meeting in Malaysia in March.

Iqbal said the rebels were also awaiting the deployment of 25 ceasefire monitors from Malaysia and four other Islamic states.

"We may just have another exploratory meeting next month to discuss ways on how to proceed to the next level," he said.

Analysts believe Manila and Kuala Lumpur want talks to start before Malaysia hosts a meeting of the 57-member Organization of the Islamic Conference next month. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is also retiring at the end of October.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will discuss the peace process with Mahathir in New York, where both leaders are attending the UN General Assembly session.

"I believe we are on track. We will definitely have the talks next month," said Ramon Martinez, a defense official who sits on the government's ceasefire panel.

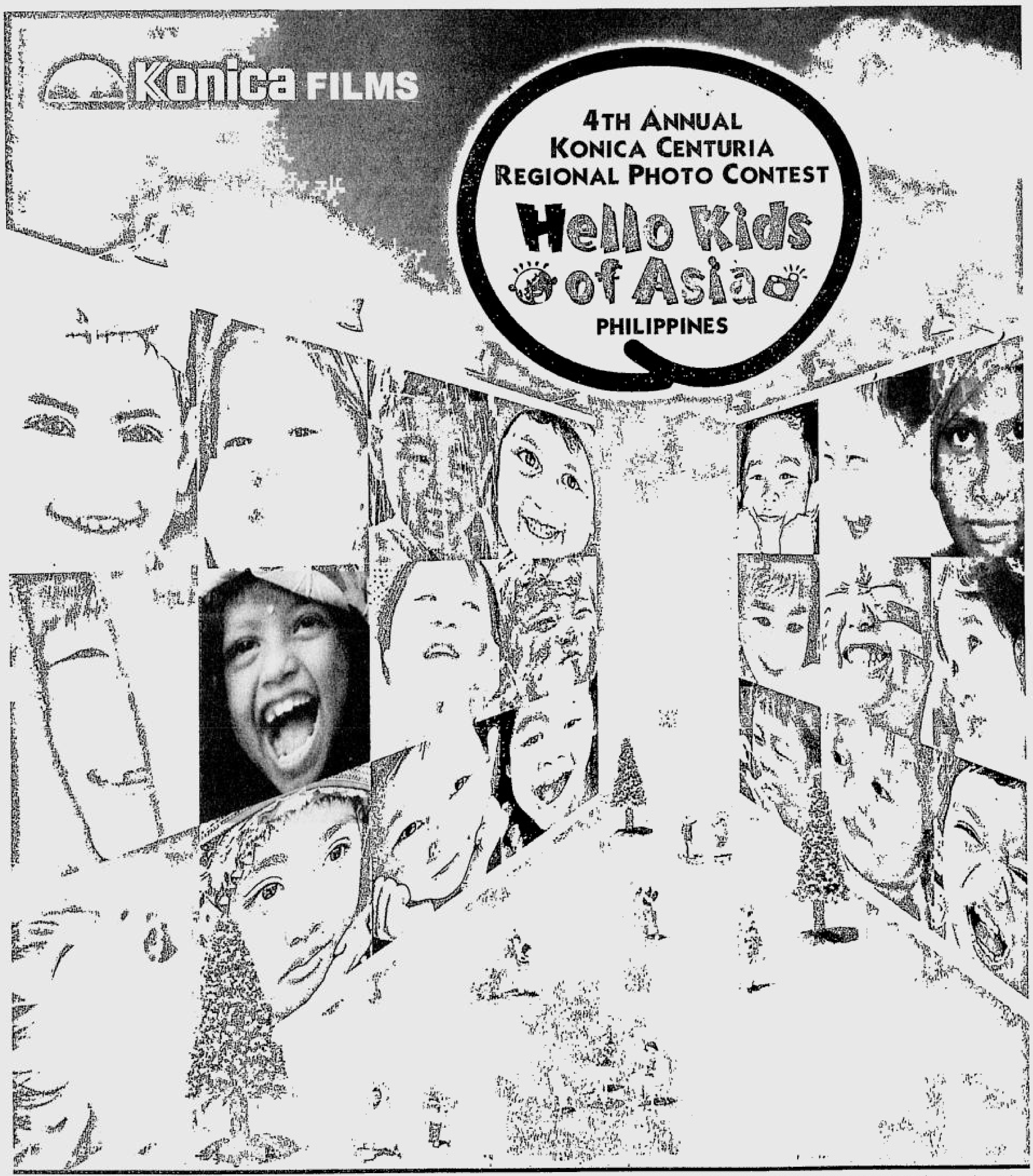
"We are even pushing our schedules forward to meet the target dates for the resumption of talks."

He gave no specific time for the negotiations to restart.

Talks stalled in late 2001 and nearly collapsed in February when troops overran Buliok. Mahathir later convinced Ms Macapagal to restart talks.

Ceasefire and technical committees from the two sides are due to meet on Oct. 4 in Davao City.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the armed forces vice chief of staff, said an advance team of Malaysian observers was due in Mindanao next week, bolstering government confidence about the resumption of talks next month. *Reuters*



You're just a smile away from the Grand Prix.

GRAND PRIX 2002

Title "Don't Go!"
Entry Person's Name Bambang Nugroho Adi
Country Indonesia

Title "Happy Hour"
Entry Person's Name Benjamin Lee M. S.
Country Malaysia

Title "How's My Crown?"
Entry Person's Name Johnson M. K.
Country India

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Prizes

- 1st Place P40,000.00
- 2nd Place P25,000.00
- 3rd - 7th Place 5 winners of Konica Revio C2 Cameras worth P 8,000.00 each
- 8th - 10th Place 3 winners of Konica Off Road 28 Cameras + 5 rolls Konica 36 shots film
- 10 Consolation Prize winners: One unit each of Olympus MD3 Cameras with 2 rolls Konica 36 shots film

Entry Procedures

- Ilakip ang entry form sa likod ng photograph
- Isulat sa entry form ang pangalan, tirahan, edad, contact numbers, signature ng nagpadala at pangalan at contact numbers ng (mga) batang kinuhaan ng litrato, parents ng mga bata o guardians, title ng litrato, petsa kung kailan ito kinuhaan, at uri ng camera na ginamit. Ang participants ay dapat mag submit ng parents or guardian's permission kung hindi siya ang magulang o guardian ng batang nasa photograph upang maiwasan ang infringing rights to personal images.
- Ilagay ang entry form, photograph, negative at parent's consent sa isang brown envelope at ipadala sa Hello Kids of Asia Philippines c/o COLUMBIA GLOBAL PHOTO SALES CORP., 129 - 35 G. Roxas St., San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City, Philippines.
- Ang entry forms ay available sa lahat ng Konica Photo Express at Columbia Photo Shops nationwide
- Ang deadline of submission of entries ay Dec. 12, 2003. However, entries will still be accepted until December 22 provided these are postmarked December 12, 2003

Entry Requirements

- Ang mga photographs na maaring isali ay dapat magpakita ng mga images ng kabataan edad 12 taon pababa
- Kailangang akma sa contest theme ("The Joy of Being a Child") ang mga photos, catching children's lively emotions on camera at ang mga bata ay dapat nakangiti o nakatawa. (Ang bata ay puwedeng kinuhaan ng litrato mag-isa o may kasama)
- Ang mga photographs ay dapat kuha ng amateur o professional photographers, unpublished and not intended for submission sa ano mang contest pati na rin ang mga photographs na closely related dito.
- Ang size ng prints ay dapat 8R (8" x 10") 20.32 cm X 25.4 cm, at ang negative ng kuha ay dapat naka attach sa likod ng litrato na ipinadala
- Puwedeng gumamit ng digital or regular camera. Ang lahat ng photo entries ay kailangan Konica Films ang ginamit at printed sa Konica Golden Dragon o Long Life 100 na papel sa alin mang Konica Photo Express shops nationwide

Judging

- Ang lahat ng entries ay dadaan for preliminary screening para pumili ng 20 finalists. Ang mga finalists naman will be judged by famous photographers at mga representative ng Konica. Pre screening will be held on December 23-24 at Columbia Global Photo Sales Corporation offices in the presence of a DTI Representative, starting at 10 am. Finals will be held at the same venue, same time and in the presence of a DTI Representative, on January 3, 2004
- A participant may send as many entries as he wants. However, only one entry per participant may qualify in the pre-screening. In the event that two or more entries qualify in the pre-screening, it will be the judges who will decide which among the entries will eventually qualify
- Criteria for Judging:
  Positive Values - 40%. There should be at least one positive value conveyed in the photograph (e.g. friendship, respect for elders, etc.)
  Originality - 25%. The entry should not be a combination of two or more photographs that were manipulated to appear as only one. No digital or other forms of special effects should have been employed to enhance the photograph
  Creativity - 25%. The child/children in the photograph should be refreshingly presented and interestingly titled
  Adherence to Contest Theme - 10%. Child/children should be photographed smiling or laughing

Announcement of Winners

- Ang maswerteng mananalo will be notified via registered mail. Abangan sa major newspaper of national circulation ang announcement ng pangalan ng mga nagwagi. Ang mga mananalo ay makakatanggap din ng tawag mula sa Konica representatives.
- Prizes may be claimed at Columbia Global Photo Sales Corporation located at 129 - 135 G. Roxas St., San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City, Philippines. Provincial winners will be informed thru registered mail of the nearest Konica Photo Express or Columbia Photo shops where they can claim their prizes.
- Winners will have to present the Registered Mail, a valid ID (Driver's License, Passport, Voter's ID, Professional ID, Postal I.D. or Company ID) with picture and signature, upon claiming their prizes
- Winners may choose to have his/her representative to claim the prize for him/her provided he/she will give an authorization letter to his representative, together with the original Registered Mail and two of his/her valid IDs. Authorized representative will also have to show a valid ID for verification.
- Prizes may be claimed within 60 calendar days upon receipt of registered mail.
- Prizes are not convertible to cash.
- Taxes for prizes worth more than P 10,000.00 will be shouldered by winner/s.

Disqualification

- Ang lahat ng mga opisyal, empleyado ng Columbia Global Photo Sales Corp. Konica Photo Express, Columbia Photo Shops, kasama na ang kanilang mga ad agencies at relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest

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• Ang karapatan na gamitin ang mga nanalong photographs sa mga exhibits, printed materials, advertising catalogues at posters ay sa sponsor • Ang sponsor ay hindi responsible kung mawala o masira ang alin mang entry sa mail • Photographs may be disqualified if entry criteria have been violated • Ang lahat ng entries ay magiging property na ng sponsor

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ARMM governor hails Ermita appointment

By TJ Burgonio and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

EDUARDO Ermita's appointment as defense chief would augur well for the government's ongoing exploratory talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front meant to end decades of insurgency in the south, Gov. Parouk Hussin said yesterday.

Hussin, governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said Ermita was the right man because of his long experience in negotiating peace with the Moro National Liberation Front in the 1990s, and then with the MILF.

Ermita is the current presidential adviser on the peace process.

"He's the most conversant about the peace and order as well as the overall military situation in Mindanao," Hussin said during a press conference at the ARMM liaison office in Makati City.

Government negotiators are holding exploratory talks with their counterparts in the MILF in preparation for formal negotiations next month in Malaysia.

Ermita, 68, who was named defense secretary last Tuesday, expressed a desire to stay on as adviser on the peace process, but President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appointed Teresita Deles, lead convenor of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, in his stead. *With an AP report*

'Itchy feet, not ailing eyes'

FOOTLOOSE former first lady Imelda Marcos is traveling not to cure her sickness, but to satisfy her wanderlust.

Government prosecutors said as much yesterday in a motion asking the Sandiganbayan Fourth Division to suspend its earlier decision allowing Ferdinand Marcos' widow to travel to the United States to seek medical help.

Imelda is facing multiple graft charges.

According to Special Prosecutors Robert Kallos and Rabendranath Uy, the trip, as her own appeal revealed, was "not emergency in nature or of extreme urgency."

In their eight-page motion, the government lawyers said this was clear in "her endeavor to embark on a tour of Portugal, Italy and France right after her alleged medical examination in the US."

The Sandiganbayan permitted Imelda to take the month-long trip to secure treatment for her eyes and then proceed to Catholic pilgrimage sites, including the Vatican. *Armand N. Nocum*

NEWSBRIEFS

OIC bid looking good

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Blas Ople yesterday said two ranking officials of the Organization of the Islamic Conference have expressed support for the Philippines' bid for observer status in the 52-member body.

In a statement from New York, Ople said he met with Libyan Foreign Minister Abdulrahman Mohamed Shalgham and OIC Secretary General Dr. Abdelouahed Belkeziz on the sidelines of the 58th UN General Assembly.

"Both officials continue to e supportive of our bid for observer status; we hope to be admitted soon," Ople said, adding there was a possibility the country's bid would be taken up at the OIC summit in Kuala Lumpur next month. ***Gerald G. Lacuarta***

No changes in oil inventory

THE PHILIPPINES will not make adjustments to its minimum inventory requirements for local oil companies despite a production cut announced by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

"We don't see any reason to increase or reduce minimum inventory. It will be status quo," said Energy Secretary Vicente Perez, in reaction to concerns Opec's decision to cut its daily oil output by 900,000 barrels would affect the Philippines' oil supply. As of Sept 15, the country's oil inventory stood at 64 days.

Perez also ruled out any price impact of the output cut on local pump prices. ***AFP***

Prosecutor nabbed

DEPARTMENT of Interior and Local Government agents arrested a public prosecutor for extortion on Tuesday.

Chief Insp. Eduardo Villena, of the DILG's Task Force Jericho, identified the suspect as Prosecutor I Mario Veloso, 49, of Cabanatuan City.

The victim, Sergio Sulit, said Veloso initially demanded P15,000 from him in exchange for a favorable ruling in a criminal case involving his son. Sulit said Veloso later agreed to reduce the amount to P10,000 and an entrapment was set up.

Veloso has denied the charges. ***Nelson F. Flores***

Evidence irrelevant–Erap

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada, who has opted not to defend himself in his plunder trial, has asked the Sandiganbayan to junk the evidence government prosecutors have presented against him.

Through his lawyers, Estrada said the evidence proffered by government prosecutors was "irrelevant" since there was no relation between the "items of proof and the proposition they propose to establish." ***Armand Nocum***

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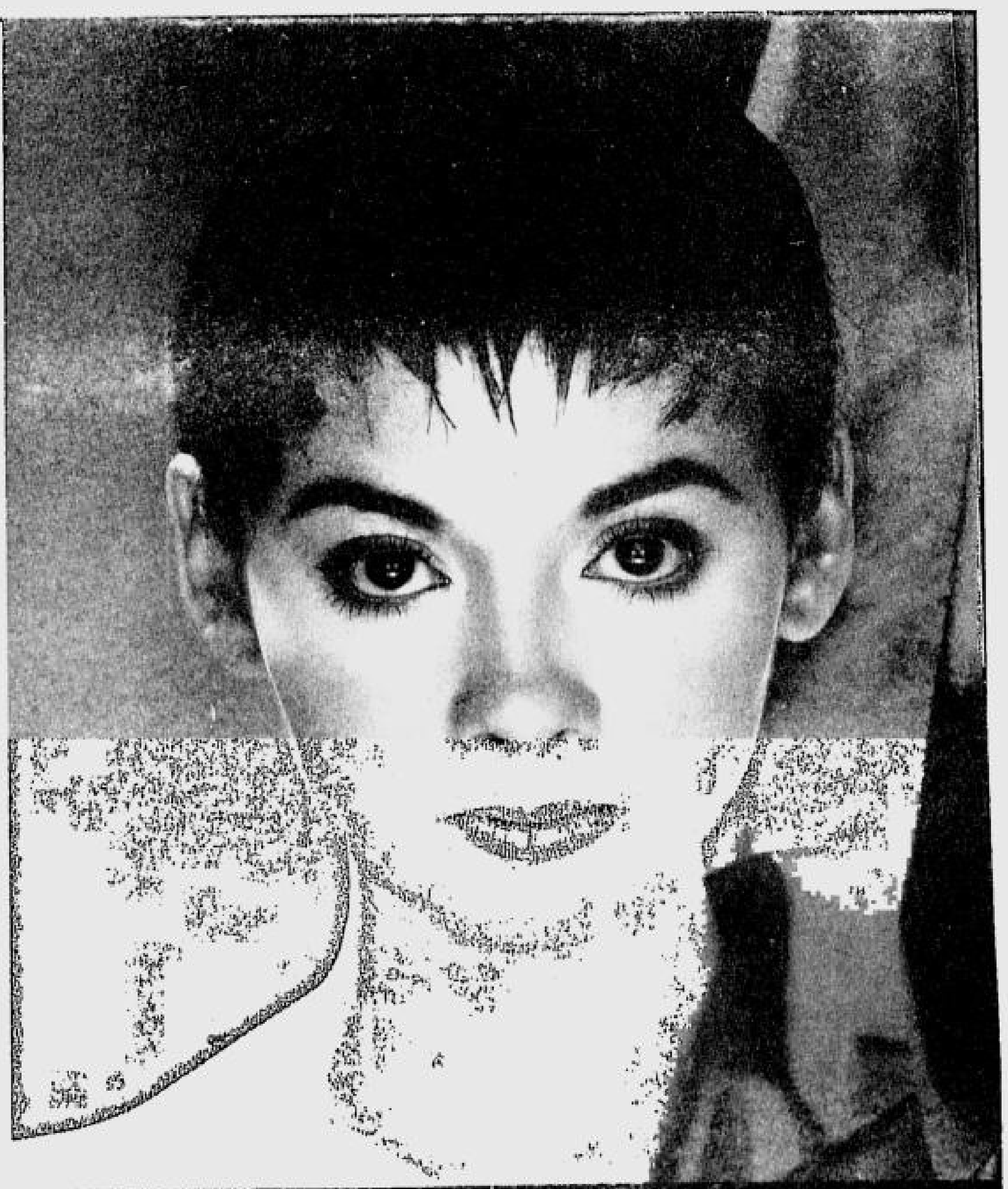

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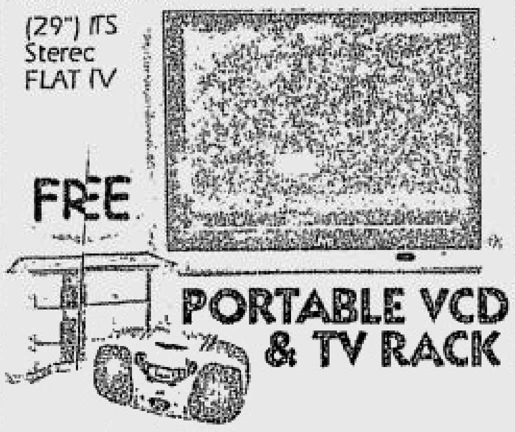

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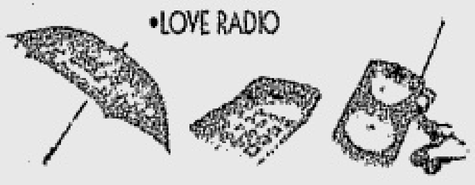

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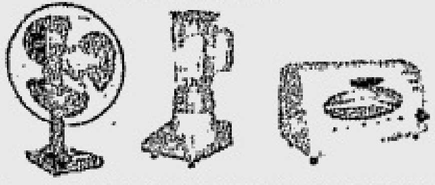

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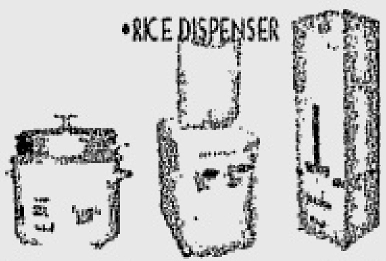

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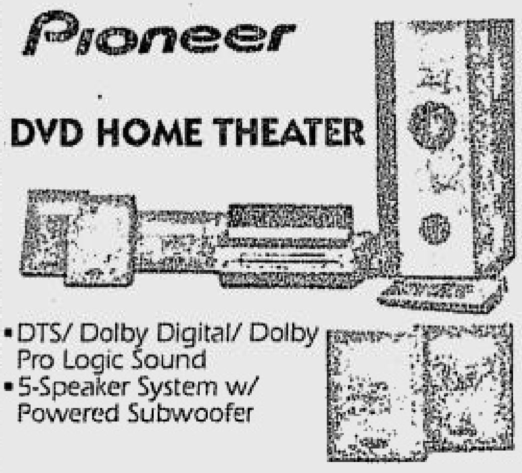

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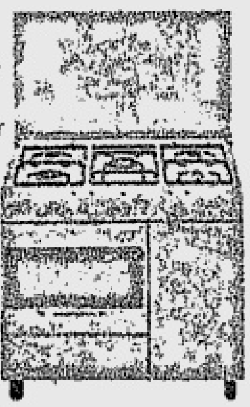

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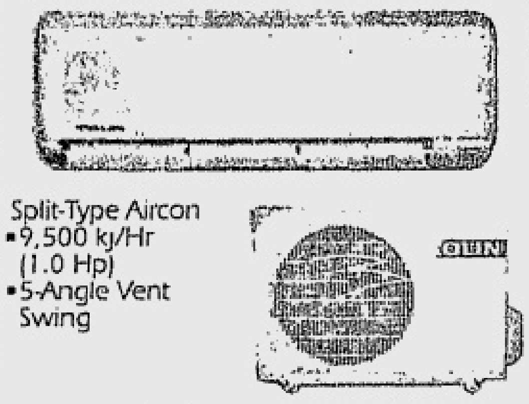

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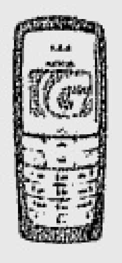

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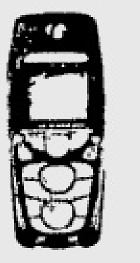

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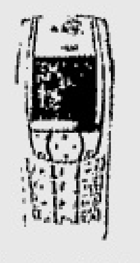

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Judge to decide site of RP sailors' suit

MIAMI—The families of Filipino sailors killed or injured in a boiler explosion on a cruise ship docked in Miami have a right to pursue lawsuits in US courts, their attorneys argued in federal court Wednesday.

But Norwegian Cruise Line said contracts the sailors signed require that any injury claims be submitted to arbitration in the Philippines.

Families of dead sailors could receive a possible $50 million each if the suits are heard in the United States but just $50,000 if the cases are heard in the Philippines. *AP*

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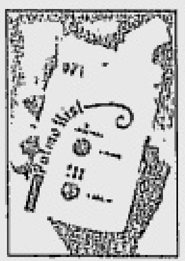

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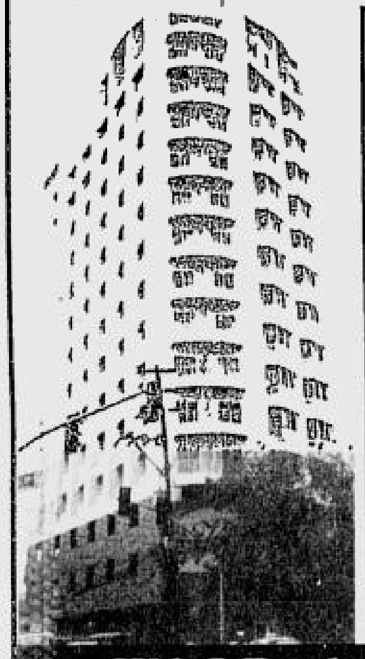

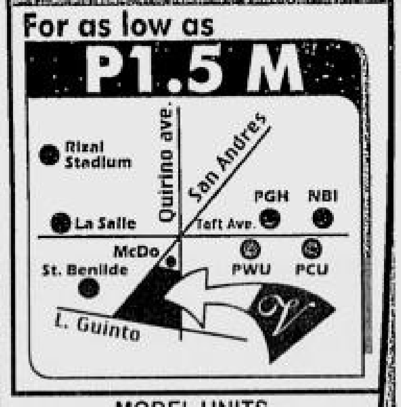

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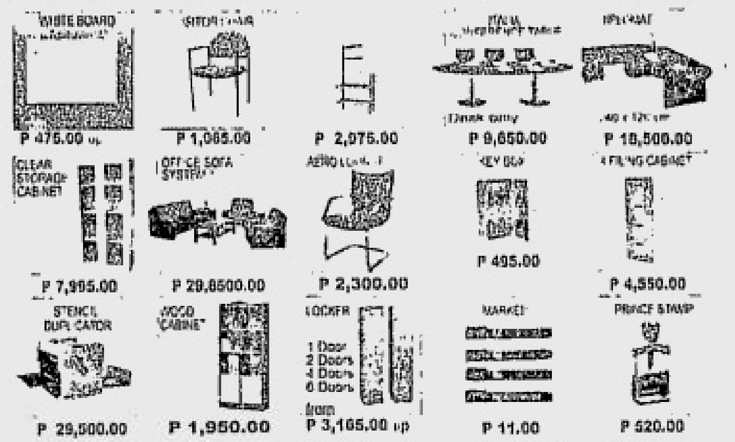

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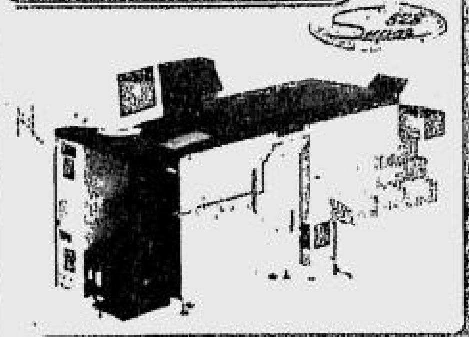

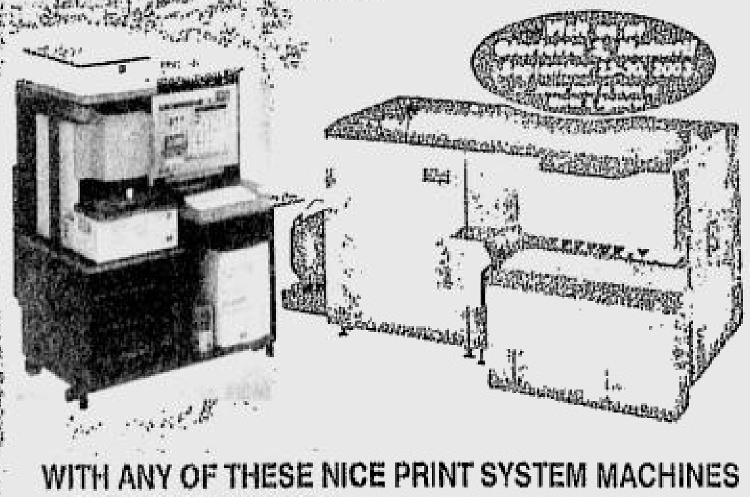

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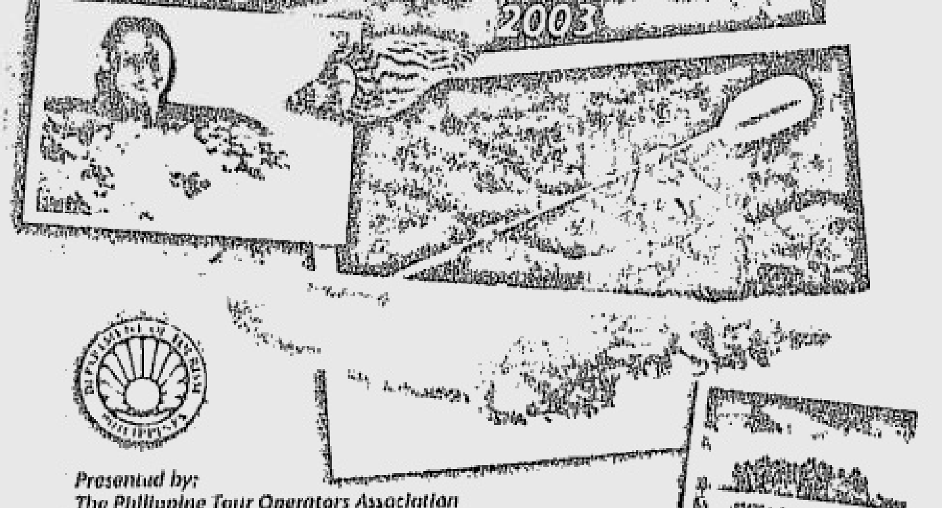

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Ombudsman hooks 'big fish,' suspends DPWH usec

By Armand Nocum

CLAIMING to have at last caught a "big fish," the Ombudsman's office yesterday imposed a six-month suspension on Public Works Undersecretary Salvador Pleyto, one of the top government officials to have failed to pass the so-called lifestyle check in the government's anti-corruption drive.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo said the suspension was issued after "considering the strong evidence of guilt" against Pleyto who faces charges of grave misconduct and dishonesty before the Sandiganbayan antigraft court.

The Malacañang-based Transparency Group and the Lifestyle Check Coalition has charged Pleyto with graft for reportedly amassing P16.6 million worth of undeclared real property in Sta. Maria, Bulacan.

The properties were found to be "disproportionate" to Pleyto's lawful income. Pleyto earns about P346,500 annually.

Assistant Ombudsman Ernesto Nocos said in a press statement that Pleyto's properties were "recorded in the name of his wife, Miguela Pleyto, and his children, Russel, Mary Grace and Salvador Pleyto Jr."

Nocos, who is the spokesman of the Ombudsman's office, said the properties listed in the names of Pleyto family members were "unexplained wealth" since Pleyto's wife and children had no substantial income to show that they had the capacity to lawfully acquire the properties.

The Ombudsman also took note of the "unusual increase" in Pleyto's declared net worth in his statement of assets and liabilities from 2001 and 2002.

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RP spends only $13 per farmer

THE PHILIPPINES spends just $13 for every farmer, way below the average of $1,350 that is spent by Asean neighbors Malaysia and Thailand, according to Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr.

Lorenzo said the government needs to provide more support to Filipino farmers in the form of credit and technical assistance to make Philippine agricultural products more competitive in both domestic and international markets.

"We have to make each of our farmers profitable by making them more productive, use better systems and help them market their products," the agriculture secretary said.

The country should work at developing a commodity network that will "slowly but surely" make Filipino farmers more competitive against their foreign rivals, he said.

Lorenzo pointed out that while the government allocates $13 in the budget for each Filipino farmer, Thailand provides $900 in support for every Thai farmer and Malaysia $1,800.

But the support that these two Association of Southeast Asian Nations members provide to their farmers is nothing compared to the $50,000 and $100,000 in subsidies that the United States gives each of its farmers every year, he said.

"Just recently, President George Bush even increased the government subsidy for US farmers to the level being given by European governments to their farm sectors," he said.

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PTA workers on war path vs Gordon

By Jerome Aning

NOW it's the employees of the Philippine Tourism Authority who are mad at Secretary Richard Gordon.

The employees, numbering 1,700, were reportedly miffed by Gordon's suggestion the PTA's Pampanga office, and possibly the agency itself, be abolished in the wake of delays in the tourism village project in the province.

"PTA employees have been in full support of all his projects. We do not understand why he is attacking the same people who are helping him," said Teresita Diapolet, president of the Association of Dedicated Employees of Philippine Tourism (Adept).

On Monday, Gordon berated officials of the PTA's Central Luzon Office for delays in the renovation of the "Hilaga" Exhibit at the Philippine Christmas Village in San Fernando City, Pampanga. Hilaga's "soft opening" had been scheduled last week.

Gordon said the PTA failed to complete the renovation work, remove the old nipa huts at the site, replace the Philippine flag, and invite traders to the expo.

He supposedly called Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo to propose that the PTA regional office, and possibly the entire agency, be decommissioned or reorganized.

This proved to be too much for the PTA employees.

"We are already moving heaven and earth for his projects," the PTA employees said in a statement, adding that the project's final stage was only begun four days before its scheduled soft opening.

Be patient, Palace tells businessmen

MALACAÑANG yesterday urged the unhappy businessmen to be patient and wait for the government's economic reforms and security provisions to bear fruit within the next six months.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo told the INQUIRER that the "next six months would bear the President out" as her reforms in the economy and security start paying dividends.

The INQUIRER reported Thursday that businessmen were sharply divided on whether the President should seek another term. While some businessmen feel that she should run because she was working hard, others were more cynical especially with the string of events in the last few months—the Oakwood mutiny, the rash of kidnappings and bank robberies, and the Jose Pidal controversy—and they want her to stick by her Dec. 30 declaration not to run in the 2004 elections.

Saludo said: "There will always be sectors in any segment of society that will have negative or positive feelings for the President. We are always listening to various segments where the government might improve and we are trying to address their concerns."

Saludo said the government has been "doing a good job" addressing the businessmen's concerns on the economy and peace and order.

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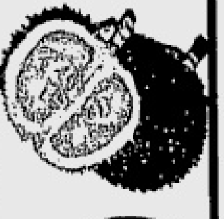

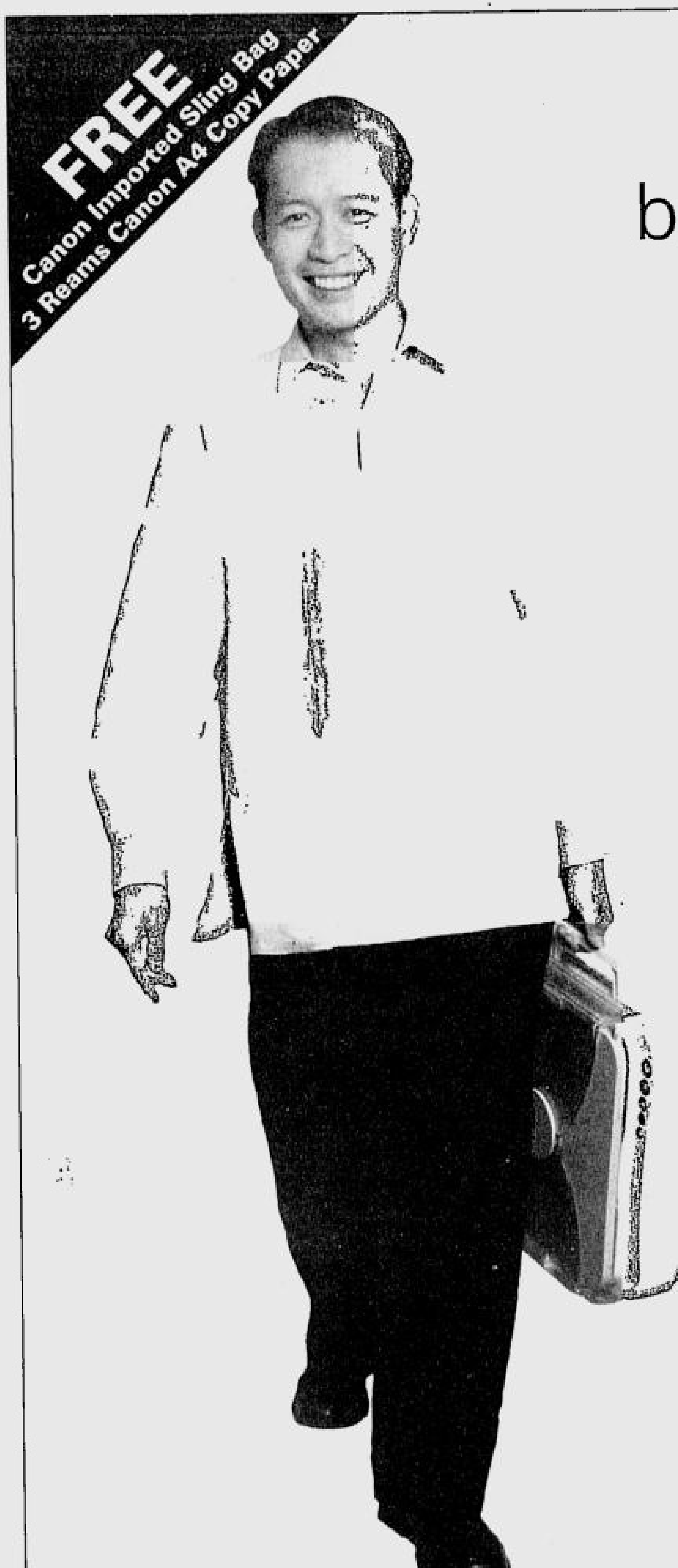

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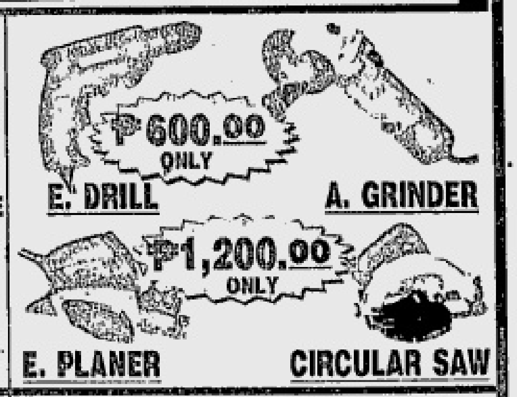

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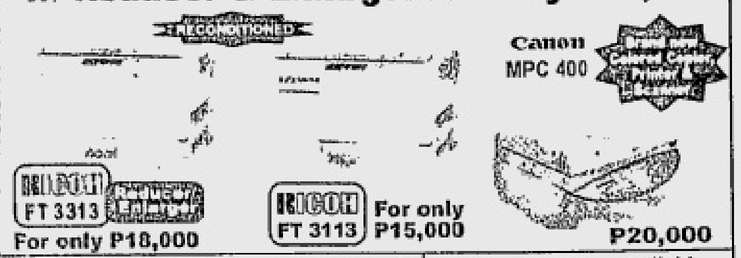

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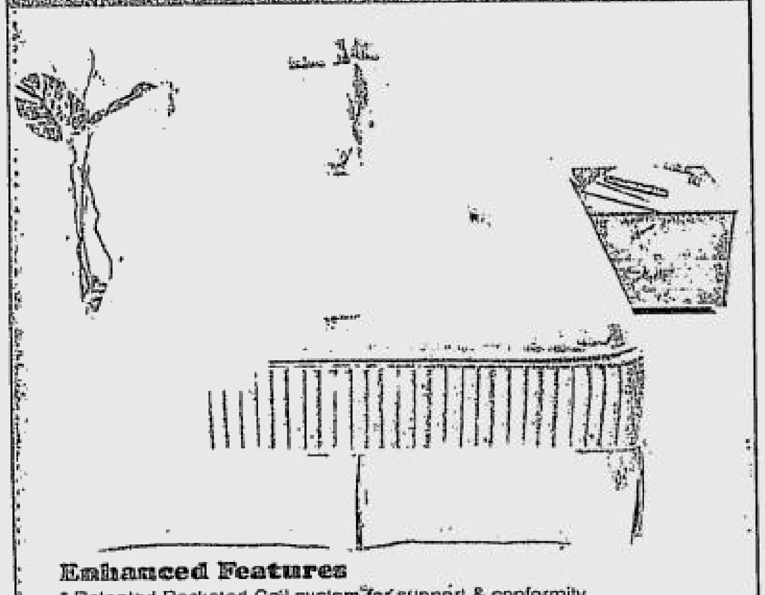

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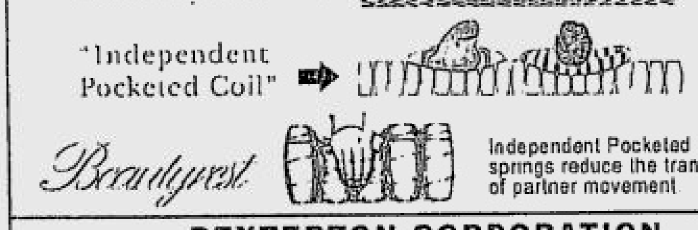

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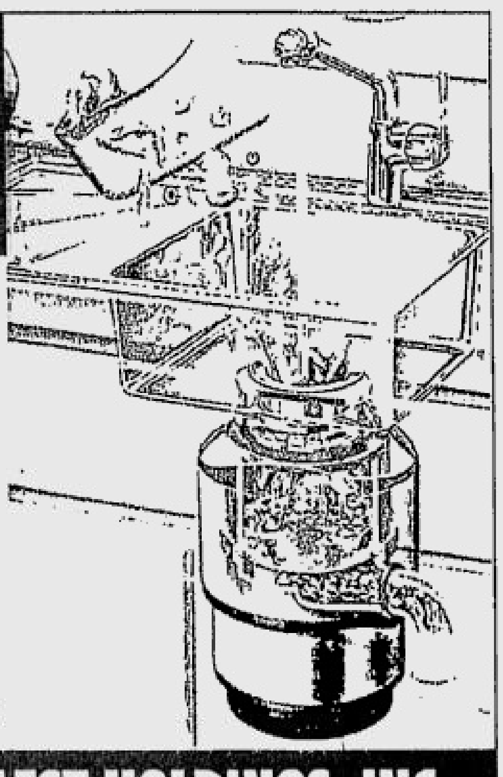

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Solons up in arms over 'railroading' of bill abolishing BIR

SEVERAL congressmen are crossing party lines to seek the recall of the controversial measure that would lead to the abolition of the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), the creation of the National Revenue Authority (NRA) in its place, and the eventual privatization of the government's tax collection function.

Rep. Aniceto G. Saludo Jr. (Southern Leyte), one of the leading opponents of the NRA bill, said protesting congressmen bewailed the "high-handed and arrogant" treatment of requests for fair play in the hearings of the measure and the breach of parliamentary rules and procedures committed by some House leaders.

Saludo said the measure is being railroaded by Rep. Jules Ledesma, chair of the House committee on ways and means, which, Saludo said, had no jurisdiction over the bill because it is not a tax measure. He said the measure should be tackled by the House committee on government reorganization.

The first salvo what is shaping up to be a major firefight in the House, which has put Ledesma and House Majority Floor Leader Neptali Gonzales Jr. on the firing line, was a letter to Gonzales prior to the House recess signed by 51 congressmen seeking the recall of the controversial measure from the committee on ways and means to the committee on government reorganization.

Rep. Victor Sumulong, chair of the House committee on government reorganization, had requested the recall of the NRA bill from the committee on ways and means to his committee because the bill was clearly proposing to reorganize the BIR, not to introduce a revenue measure.

However, the rules committee chaired by Majority Floor Leader Neptali Gonzales Jr. did not act of the request. That, plus the "high-handed and arrogant" treatment of House members had triggered the protest among congressmen, Saludo said.

Saludo said "it did not matter that more than 50 House leaders and members stood up and justifiably requested for propriety and observance of parliamentary rules and practices in the enactment of the measure.

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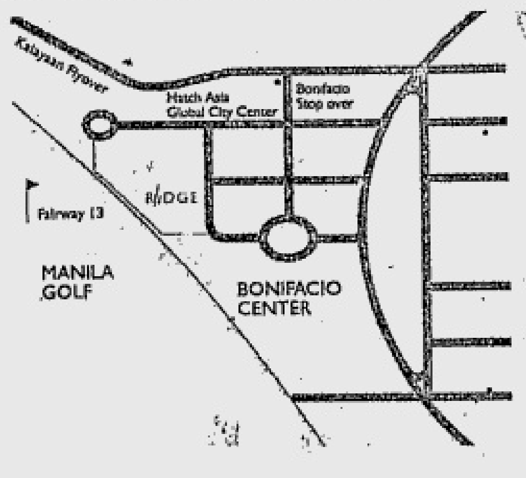
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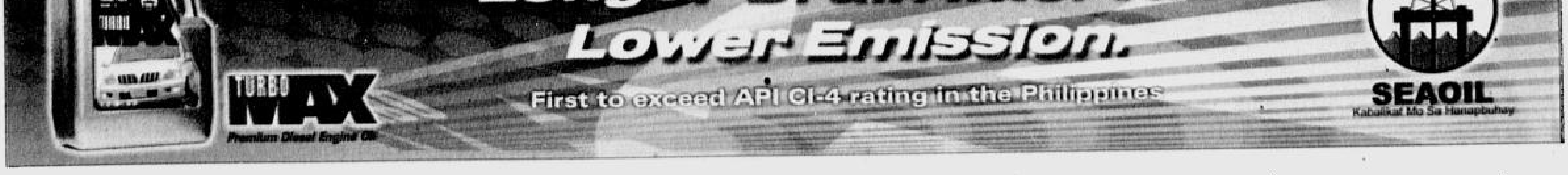
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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Iraq probe expected to report no proof of banned weapons

UNITED NATIONS/WASHINGTON—An eagerly awaited US inquiry was expected to report finding no concrete proof Baghdad had the banned weapons used to justify the invasion of Iraq as US President George W. Bush sought foreign money and troops on Wednesday to help rebuild the country.

A senior US official, who requested anonymity, said the report by weapons inspector David Kay is expected to report finding "documentary evidence" of Iraqi chemical and biological weapons programs, but no proof of the arms themselves.

Bush had his first formal meeting with Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder since the German leader angered Washington by making opposition to military action against Iraq, justified largely as a quest for such weapons, the centerpiece of his 2002 re-election campaign.

Meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Bush and Schroeder said they had laid to rest their dispute over the war. Schroeder pledged economic assistance for reconstruction and training for Iraqi police and soldiers in Germany, but not peacekeepers on the ground.

Polls have shown US support for Bush slipping as costs and casualties in Iraq rise, and searches have unearthed neither ex-President Saddam Hussein nor the alleged weapons.

The Kay report "generally will be about chemical and biological weapons and I think he's going to find evidence, documentary evidence, statements by Iraqi scientists and technicians, that they had chemical and biological weapons production programs," the senior US official said.

"Whether they will find or disclose anything on the weapons themselves, I doubt," he added.

The official also said that former Iraqi Defense Minister Sultan Hashim Ahmed, who surrendered to US forces, was given "effective" immunity from prosecution and Washington has high hopes he will provide significant information on Saddam's weapons activities.

The CIA described the Kay report as an initial document that will "reach no firm conclusions."

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld pressed his case for $87 billion to occupy and rebuild Iraq and Afghanistan to legislators in Washington.

He told the US Senate Appropriations Committee that US-led military and civilian forces have "racked up a series of achievements in both security and civil reconstruction that may very well be without precedent." *Reuters*

A SOUTH Korean soldier in traditional costume brandishes a sword during a rehearsal for Wednesday's 55th anniversary of the founding of South Korea's armed forces at an army base in Seoul Sept. 25. President Roh Moo-hyun, facing hostility at home to a US request for military help in Iraq, has linked the deployment of South Korean troops to progress on defusing the crisis over North Korea's nuclear ambitions. REUTERS

Blast kills 1 at Baghdad hotel for US reporters

BAGHDAD—A bomb exploded on Thursday at a Baghdad hotel housing journalists from US television network NBC, killing a Somali guard, in the latest in a string of deadly attacks targeting foreigners in Iraq.

The blast, which echoed across central Baghdad at dawn, shattered windows around the three-floor Aike Hotel, wounding some guests with flying glass.

David Moodie, a 44-year-old soundman and engineer with NBC, said he had been in bed in a first floor room above where the bomb exploded around 7 a.m.

"I was awake in bed thinking 'Another day in paradise' and then the bomb went off," said Moodie, wearing shorts, sandals and a T-shirt spattered with blood. "It blew in the windows—the glass, plaster, everything."

Moodie was wounded in the right arm. After the blast, he said, he wrapped himself in a blanket in case there was any more flying glass. Then he got up, ran out and went to see how his colleagues were.

"It could have been a lot worse," he said.

Police said the bomb was placed on the pavement a few meters from the hotel and near a generator. The blast left a crater about one meter wide and five centimeters deep in the concrete.

"It was a small bomb, because if it was a big bomb it would have destroyed the whole building," Iraqi police Lt. Col. Salman Abed Karim said at the scene. *Reuters*

US looking into Syria link in Guantanamo spying

WASHINGTON—The United States is investigating the extent of Syria's role in alleged espionage at the Guantanamo detention center for hundreds of Afghan war prisoners, a top general said Wednesday, as a probe widened to other US services.

An Air Force translator, Senior Airman Ahmad al-Halabi, was arrested July 23 on charges of espionage and aiding the enemy by attempting to send intelligence, names and serial numbers of prisoners to Syria, and carrying a laptop computer with 180 classified notes for delivery to Syria.

"If it turns out that this guy is guilty, and it turns out that he was talking to Syria in some light, then that's an issue that the government will deal with at the time," General Peter Pace, vice chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters.

But asked whether Syria was directly involved in spying at the Guantanamo Bay facility in Cuba, he said: "We do not know. We are looking at that."

In Damascus, Syrian Information Minister Ahmad al-Hassan called the charges "baseless and illogical."

"How could Syria have spies in Guantanamo? Is the CIA incapable of finding a trustworthy translator?" he said.

Halabi is one of two US soldiers detained in a widening espionage case involving the detention camp adjacent to the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base on the Communist island. An army chaplain is also being held.

Defense officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed that other US servicemen were under investigation as part of the probe.

The US indictment against al-Halabi charged that he attempted to deliver secret documents to a foreign citizen "with intent or reason to believe it would be used to the injury of the United States or the advantage of Syria, a foreign nation."

The charges also said he failed to report contact with the Syrian embassy.

The indictment alleges he was heading for Syria around July 23 when he was arrested at Jacksonville Naval Air Station in Florida on a flight from Guantanamo.

He had a laptop computer with over 180 electronic versions of notes and two handwritten notes from Guantanamo detainees with the intention of delivering them to a citizen of a foreign government, according to the indictment.

They included "writings relating to the national defense, which directly concerned intelligence gathering and planning for the United States' war against terrorists." *AFP*

World awaits Islamic verdict on Amina Lawal stoning case

KATSINA, Nigeria—A Nigerian mother sentenced under Islamic law to die by stoning for adultery will learn her fate on Thursday when an appeals court rules in the case that has gripped international attention.

Campaign groups outraged by the sentence against Amina Lawal, a 31-year-old illiterate woman, have vowed to mount protests if the Sharia Appeals court in the conservative northern Nigerian state of Katsina upholds the sentence.

"If the sentence is upheld, the international community will condemn Nigeria outright," said Shehu Sani, president of the northern-Nigerian based Civil Rights Congress.

"It will give Nigeria a very bad image. It will also affect foreign investment," Sani told Reuters from the city of Kaduna, a hotbed of sectarian violence over sharia in which an estimated 5,000 people have died since early 2000.

The introduction of sharia criminal law by a dozen states in predominantly Islamic northern Nigeria has deepened ethnic and religious rifts in Nigeria, a multi-ethnic country of 120 million. Lawal's case has also divided Muslim opinion.

Sani said his group's supporters who launched a hunger strike last week to draw attention to Lawal's plight had received death threats from hardline Muslim fundamentalists.

Western governments led by the European Union have urged the Nigerian government to intervene since Amina was convicted in March 2002 for having a baby 10 months after a divorce.

President Olusegun Obasanjo, a Christian, has spent the last four years struggling to deal with deadly eruptions of sectarian violence in northern Nigeria.

He has repeatedly assured the world, not least during a visit to the United Nations this week, that his government would not allow any stoning sentence to be carried out.

But Obasanjo must be mindful of an influential Muslim lobby that has historically wielded significant political power in the country split almost evenly between Christians and Muslims.

He is also constrained by Nigeria's US-style federal constitution whose separation of powers between the central and state governments allowed regional authorities to adopt a parallel criminal code in the first place.

But even if the appeals court in the north central town of Katsina upholds the stoning sentence, Lawal can still take her case to a Supreme Court under federal authority. *Reuters*

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BULACAN (BALIWAG)
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALIWAG 33YW
Portion of Baliwag town proper including J.M. Basa, E. delos Angeles, A. Luna, Guzman Sts. and Prima Berde General Merchandising.

REASON: Reconductoring work in Baliwag town proper, Bulacan.

RIZAL (SAN MATEO)
BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 1:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT PARANG 412YL
The whole Bancom Subd., Life Homes Subd. and Divine Mercy Subd. at Bgy. Gulod Malaya.

REASON: Replacement of rotted pole inside Bancom Subd.

TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1, 2003

BULACAN (OBANDO AND MEYCAUAYAN), MALABON AND VALENZUELA CITY
BETWEEN 11:30PM AND 12:00MN (TUE.,09/30/03) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:00AM AND 4:30AM (WED.,10/01/03) - PORTIONS OF CIRCUIT MALABON 59YD
Along B. Flamengco (Panghulo) Road from Rodriguez Ave. to and including Gutierrez, Gonia, Espiritu, Bautista, Cristina Sts. and DPWH in Bgy. Panghulo, Malabon.
Along B. Flamengco (Panghulo) and Paliwas Roads from near Silver Swan Compound to and including Bgys. Taliptip, Apugan, Sitios Asana, Sulok, Sunog and Tinik in Meycauayan; DZME, DZBB, Rio de Oro Canning in Bgy. Panghulo, Malabon; J.P. Rizal, S. Joaquin, Bilog, Hulo Qubadia Sts., DZXL, Sub-miniature Enterprises, Christian Era Broadcasting, Aliw Broadcasting in Bgys. Pag-asa, Paliwas, Hulo, San Pascual, Lawa and Paco in Obando.
Along F. Navarette Ave. from near Pinagkabalian Bridge to near M.H. del Pilar St. including Dunhill Plastics, Yosiko Industries and DZMM in Bgy. Panghulo in Obando.
Bgys. Wawang Pulo and Tawiran in Valenzuela City.

BETWEEN 11:30PM (TUE.,09/30/03) AND 4:30AM (WED.,10/01/03) - PORTION OF CIRCUIT MALABON 59YD
Area between F. Gutierrez St. and Malabon-Bulacan Boundary along Panghulo Road including Silver Swan Mfg. Compound in Bgy. Panghulo, Malabon

REASON: Various maintenance and line rehabilitation work along Panghulo Road in Bgy. Panghulo, Malabon.

MANILA (ERMITA)
BETWEEN 11:30PM AND 12:00MN (TUE.,09/30/03) AND THEN BETWEEN 5:00AM AND 5:30AM (WED.,10/01/03) - PORTION OF CIRCUIT TEGEN 55B-ERMITA 43S
Portion of San Marcelino, U.N. Ave., Gen. Luna and Padre Faura Sts. including Emilio Aguinaldo College Cpd. and Manila Bethel Temple.

BETWEEN 11:30PM (TUE.,09/30/03) AND 5:30AM (WED.,10/01/03) - PORTION OF CIRCUIT TEGEN 55B-ERMITA 43S
Portion of D. Romualdez from Zobel St. to near Paco Park including portion of Tabacalera Cpd., U.N. Ave., Adamson-Ozanam Bldg., PPL Cpd. and one-feed of Manila Prince Hotel.

REASON: Stringing of wires along D. Romualdez near U.N. Ave. for the expansion of Meralco-Paco substation feeder.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2003

VALENZUELA CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 12:30AM AND THEN 2:30AM AND 3:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BAGBAGUIN 415YZ
Portion of F. Bautista and Apolonia Sts. from Liwanag St. to near East Service Road including St. John Villas Subd., San Agustin Village, Fortuna Paper Mills, Metro Container Corp., Alcophil Metal, Rosko Metal Products, Kalvin Mktg., Promyo Piggery Farm and 3H Enterprises in Bgy. Mapulang Lupa.

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 3:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BAGBAGUIN 415YZ
Portion of East Service Road from near Apolonia St. to near Malinta Interchange including Royal Family Mall, De Castro Subd., FAR Sampaguita Lodge, Sankyo Metal and Calamba Metal in Bgy. Paso De Blas.

REASON: Erection of primary steel pole and re-construction of distribution facilities along East Service Road in Bgy. Paso de Blas.

QUEZON CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF BALINTAWAK 405E
Area bounded by Corregidor, Abra, Ilocos Norte, Cotabato, Fort Santiago, Iloilo, Ilocos Sur, Nueva Ecija and Masbate Sts. including Bgys. Bago Bantay and Alicia.

REASON: Commissioning of sevice to new Elementary School in Bgy. Bago Bantay.

QUEZON (LUCENA CITY)
BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 11:00AM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT LUCENA I 11ZG
Portion of Quezon Ave. and Aurora Ave. from near PLDT to near Lucena Diversion Road including Hermanas Capistrano Subd., West Employee Subd., Pag-ibig Park Subd., Capistrano Subd., Camp Nakar and St. Peter Subd. in Lucena City.

BETWEEN 11:00AM AND 12:00NN - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT LUCENA I 12ZG
Portion of Quezon Ave., Fausta and Enriquez Sts. from Zaballero Subd. to near Gomez St. including Sacred Heart College in Lucena City.

REASON: Repair work inside Meralco-Lucena 1 substation in Lucena City.

WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1-2, 2003

LAS PIÑAS CITY AND PARAÑAQUE CITY
BETWEEN 11:00PM AND 11:30PM (WED.,10/01/03) AND THEN BETWEEN 5:30AM AND 6:00AM (THU.,08/28/03) - PORTION OF CIRCUITS PAMPLONA 45XD AND 47XD
Along CAA Road from Alabang-Zapote Road to near Tropical Ave. including Empalico Homes, FMC, Casimiro Village, Villa Miranda Subd., Villa Celina Townhomes, Rohm & Haas Phils., Pacific Continental, Pioneer Oil and Casimiro Vill. 3 in Bgy. Talon Dos, Las Piñas City.
Portion of Aria St. and Alabang-Zapote Road from Meralco-Pamplona substation to CAA Road in Bgy. Talon Dos, Las Piñas City.
Along Saging, San Luis, Sto. Niño and San Pedro Sts. from CAA Road to Sucat Road including CAA Compound, Las Piñas City; San Antonio Valley 5, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15, Equity Homes 2 & 3 and Mihara Homes in Bgy. San Isidro, Parañaque City.
Portion of Dr. A. Santos Ave. (Sucat Road) from San Pedro St. to near Bernabe Subd. in Bgy. San Isidro, Parañaque City.
Along Tropical Ave. from CAA Road to and including Palace, Stuttgart, Sao Paolo, Rotterdam, Rio de Janeiro, Seville, La Paz, Sta. Lucia, Stockholm, Sydney, Turin, Tangier, Tehran, Taipei, Warsaw, Yokohama, Venice, Rangoon, Madrid, Moscow, Buenos Aires, Brussels, Lima, Peking, Ontario, Wellington, Quebec and Luxembourg Sts.; Southland Estate, Tropical Palace, El Grande Hotel, BF Classic Square, VAA Homes, Casoria Mariposa I and Paramount Village in Bgy. BF International, Las Piñas City.

BETWEEN 11:00PM (WED.,10/01/03) AND 6:00AM (THU.,10/02/03) - PORTION OF CIRCUITS PAMPLONA 45XD AND 47XD
Along CAA Road from near Villa Celina Townhomes to Saging St. including Camella Homes 5, Sanvesco I Subd., Recelvor, Lanzones, Mangga, Guyabano and Bagong Lipunan Sts. in Bgy. Pulang Lupa Dos, Las Piñas City.
Along Naga and DBP Roads from CAA Road to and including Airmen's Village, Villa Isabelita Subd., St. Joseph Park Subd., Camella Homes 3-D, DBP Farm Subd., Country Homes and Martinville Subd. in Bgy. Pulang Lupa Dos, Las Piñas City.

REASON: Various maintenance and line rehabilitation work along CAA Road in Bgy. Pulang Lupa Dos, Las Piñas City.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2003

CALOOCAN CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 53E
Portion of 8th and 9th Sts. from near 10th Ave. to near Jacinto St. including portion of Ma. Clara, B. Serrano, 2nd to 7th Sts., 10th to 12th Aves., A. de Jesus, S. Asistio, Macabagdad, William Shaw and 10th St.

REASON: Replacement of rotted poles along 10th and 11th Ave. near B. Serrano St.

QUEZON CITY AND CALOOCAN CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 12:30AM AND THEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS BALINTAWAK 41E AND 57E
Portion of Tullahan Road and Tandang Sora Ave. Ext. from near Fortfor Compound to near Marsteel Corp. including Sta. Quitera Village, Doña Candida Cpd., Goodyear Steel Pipe, Dela Cruz Cpd., Unibox Packaging, Gregoria Malinao Trimming and Polikon in Bgy. Sta. Quiteria, Caloocan City.
Portion of Tandang Sora Ave. from near Quirino Hi-way to near Real Village 1 including Oriental Rope Mfg., Sunny Steam Laundry, Far East Int'l Supply and Filcel Mfg. in Bgy. Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 41E AND 57E
Portion of Tandang Sora Ave. from near Marsteel Metal to and including Durex Paper Products, Associated Dev't, Baesa Foundry, Superior Packaging, Int'l Synthetic and Casaul General Hospital in Bgy. Sangandaan, Quezon City.

REASON: Preventive maintenance work inside Meralco-Kaybiga substation in Bgy. Kaybiga, Caloocan City.

QUEZON PROVINCE (MAUBAN AND SAMPALOC)
BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 3:00PM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT NEW MAUBAN 41WY
Bgys. Apasan, San Isidro, Bayongon and Alupay in Sampaloc.
Bgys. Baao, Concepcion, Sepang, Polo, San Lorenzo, Cagsiay and Town Proper in Mauban.
REASON: Preventive maintenance and testing work inside New Mauban substation.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2003

MAKATI CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 1:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS KAMAGONG 45VK; AND URDANETA 43-44VS
Portion of EDSA from Meralco-Urdaneta substation to Antonio Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road) including SM-Makati Main and Annex Bldgs., Quad I and one-feed of Dusit Hotel in Bgy. Urdaneta.
Portion of Antonio Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road) from Edsa to Paseo de Roxas including Slimmers World, Balikbayan Handicrafts, Tower Inn Hotel, Yoshinoya Century Pacific, Max's Makati, Bacchus Catering, Extelcom, Club Illusion, Tesoro Bldg. and Global Bank in Bgy. Urdaneta.
Portion of Paseo de Roxas, Trasierra, Gamboa and Rada Sts. from Pasay Road to near Legaspi St. including Soria St., B & M Bldg. # 2, Republic Glass Bldg., BA Finance Bldg. and Greenbelt Mall in Legaspi Village.
Portion of dela Rosa St. from near Castro St. to Makati Ave. including Cojuangco Bldg., Banker's Centre Condominium, SGV I & II Bldgs. in Legaspi Village.

REASON: Unbundling of circuit Urdaneta 43-44VS and commissioning of new circuits Urdaneta 43VS and 44VS.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2003

QUEZON CITY AND CALOOCAN CITY
BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS KAYBIGA 423YX AND 425YX AND PORTION OF CIRCUITS KAYBIGA 424YX AND 422YX
Portion of P. Dela Cruz St. from near Gen. Luis Ave. to and including Grand Asia Metal Corp., MGM Ind'l Cpd., Kudos Metal, Villa Angelica Subd., Cygnus Industries, Topspin Textile Mills, Crayons Processing, Prime Gold Mfg., Kwang Yang Mfg., Elephant Ind., Wonder Steel, Frisco Foundry, Harman Food, Genknit Mfg., Uni-Ipel Inds., Rogeo Metalfab Inds., Aspen Paper Products, Standard Aluminum Corp., Int'l Stainless Products, Ever Emporium Warehouse, Grand Asia Metal and Asian Flavor in Bgys. Kaybiga in Caloocan City and Nagkaisang Nayon in Quezon City.
Portion of P. Dela Cruz and Diamond Sts. from Maries-I Village to Quirino Hi-way including Cathay Metal, Falcon Metal, Pacific Metal, Holy Cross Memorial Park, Acme Knitting, Relucio Foundry, Neo Steel, Novaliches Health Ctr., Asia Textile Mill, Gold River Mill and Northwind Village in Bgy. San Bartolome in Novaliches, Quezon City.

REASON: Installation of additional primary switching facilities along Tandang Sora Ave. in Bgy. Sangandaan, Quezon City.

MANILA (INTRAMUROS)
BETWEEN 7:00AM AND 1:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT TEGEN 44B
Portion of Muralla, Victoria Ext'n. and P. Burgos Sts. in Intramuros

REASON: Replacement of leaning pole along Victoria cor. Muralla Sts.

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Briton escapes Colombia kidnappers

BOGOTA—A 19-year-old British hiker threw himself off a cliff to escape his suspected Colombian rebel kidnappers, who abducted him at gunpoint 12 days ago near the jungle ruins of an ancient Indian city, the army said Wednesday.

Speaking in broken Spanish from his hospital bed, London-born Matthew Scott said he escaped while being marched along mountaintops with the other hostages—a Briton, four Israelis, a Spaniard and a German, all of whom are still missing.

Scott said he hiked directionless for days, sometimes during heavy rain, and without eating anything until he was found on Tuesday morning by Indians living in the mountains. *Reuters*

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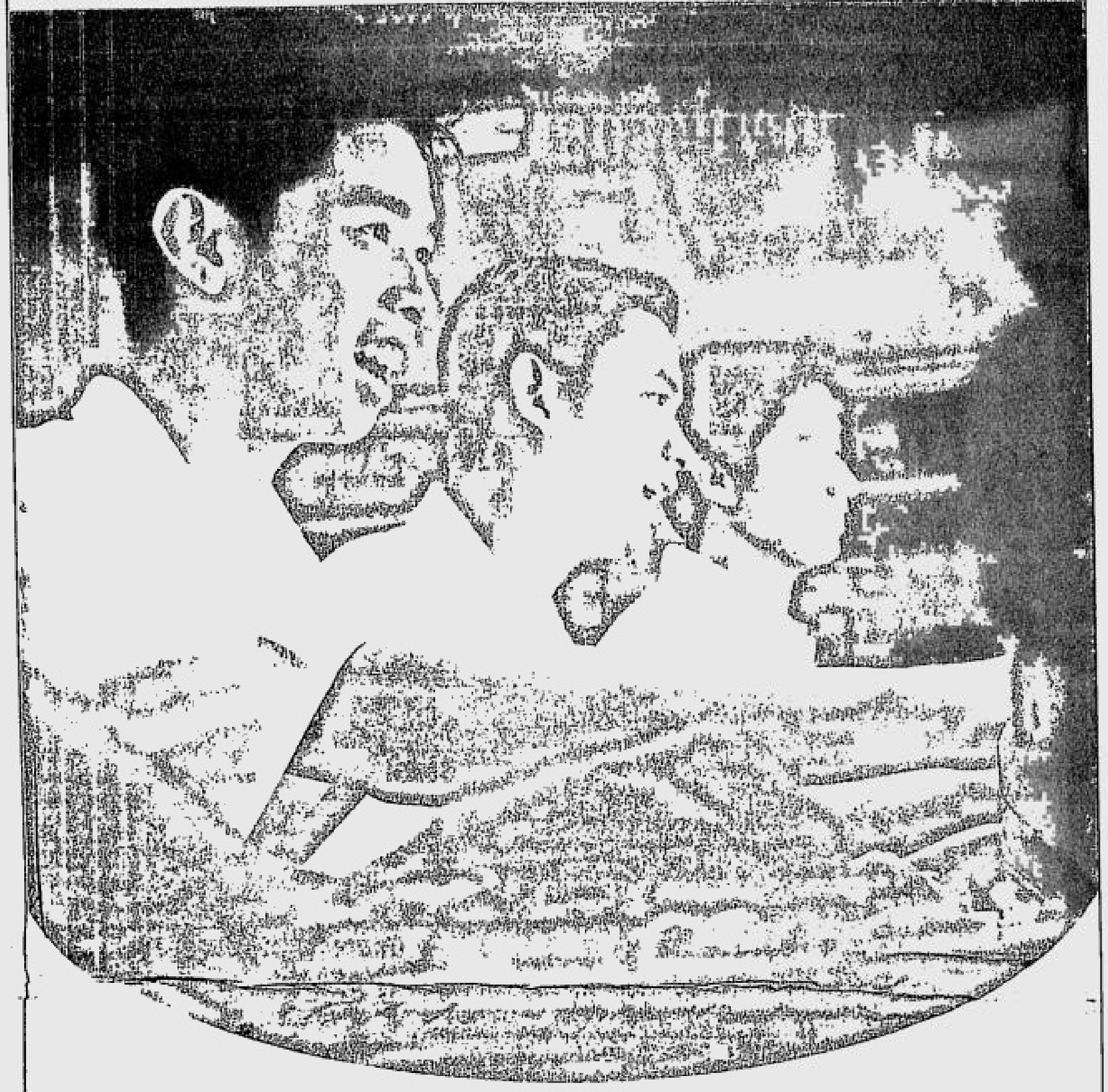
KINABUKASAN



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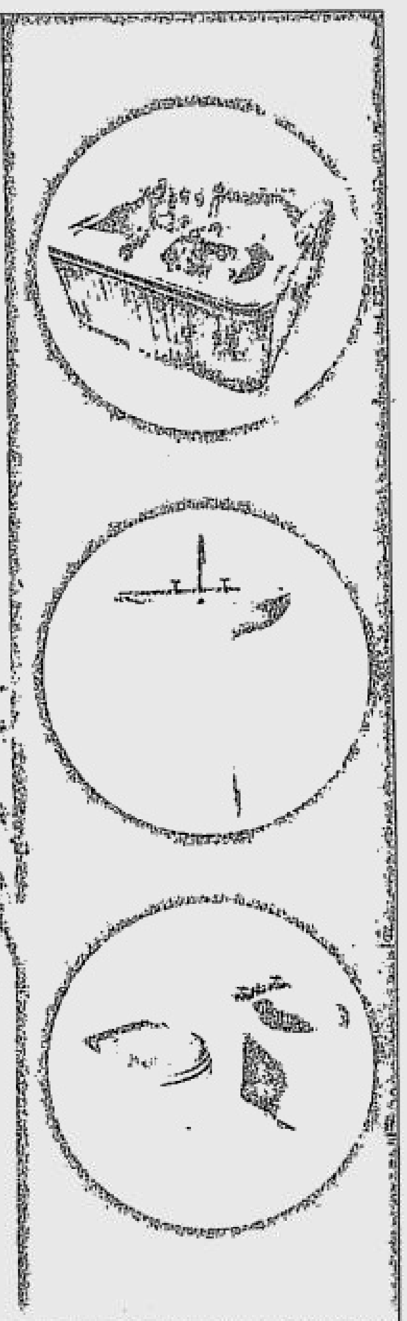

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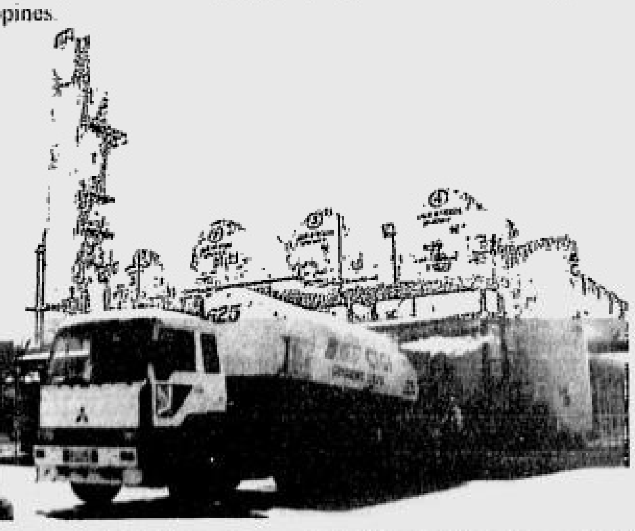
CIGI undertakes capacity optimization

CONSOLIDATED INDUSTRIAL GASES, INC. (CIGI), the country's premier industrial gases provider, has announced its plan to undergo capacity optimization at their Main Cryogenic Complex located in Apalit, Pampanga. Similar plans are also underway in other CIGI on-site plants. These initiatives will result initially in an additional 50 tons per day (TPD) for direct distribution to its customers by first quarter of 2004.

The optimization project will make use of new supply modes, plant de-bottlenecking and optimization using a state-of-the-art system. With more gas available, CIGI is committed to meet increasing demand of industrial gases to steer the growth of industries in the Philippines.

CIGI has two air separation units (ASU), the CIGI Cryogenic Complex (CCC) in Apalit, Pampanga that produces 145 TPD of liquid oxygen (LOX) and 235 TPD of liquid nitrogen (LIN) and; the special gas plant in Sta Rosa, Laguna. They also have a number of on-site plants located all over the Philippines.

Aside from capacity optimization, CIGI also introduced several improvements in its plants. Among them were various initiatives to improve its operations, procedures, warehousing, environment, safety and maintenance systems upgrade. Its Integrated Management Systems and Standards (IMSS) program was designed for the capability development of its staff using interactive learning based on up-to-date industry standards. The control system for the CIGI plant in Apalit was also upgraded to use Linear Model Predictive Control (LMPC) which will improve process efficiency and overall reliability. It is built on a structured format of theoretical and practical learning and assessment and provides for operational competence for its staff

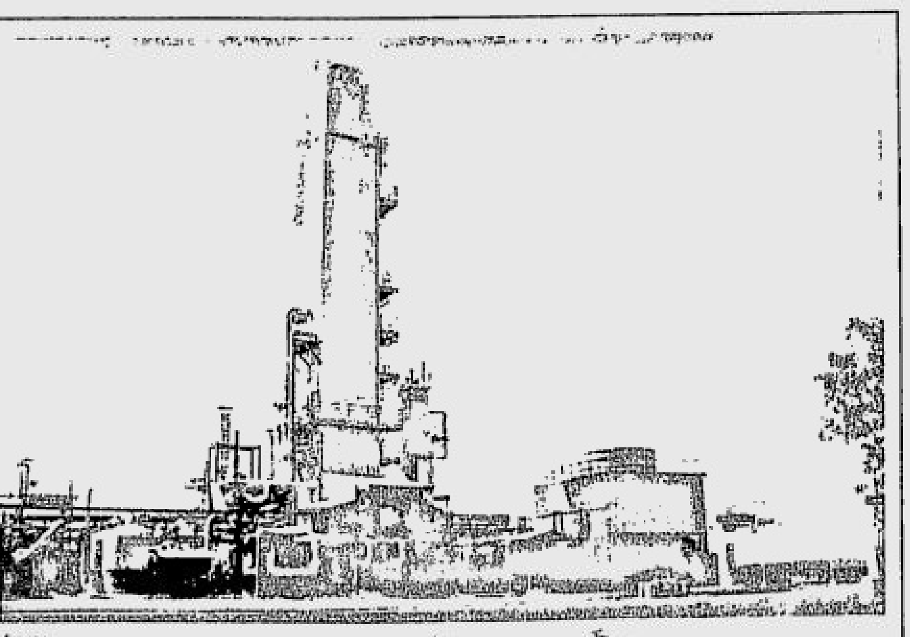


CIGI has a second ASU plant located at Sta. Rosa, Laguna with a capacity of 70/150 TPD. Considered as the most modern among the country's special gases plant facilities, CIGI's Sta. Rosa plant is the only accredited laboratory by the Bureau of Product Standards to test medical gases in the Philippines.

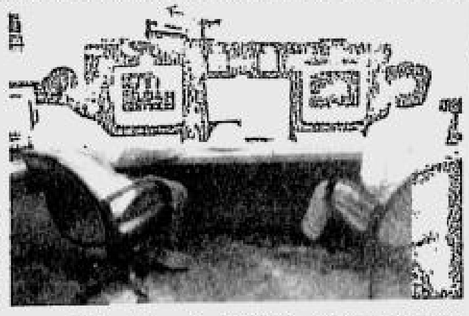
CIGI recently commissioned its Refrigerants Bulk Break Facility in its Sta. Rosa plant, which has the capacity to refill refrigerant cylinders in 10, 20 and 60 kg packagings. Also, the plant has the first and only helium transfill facility in the country to serve the needs of the electronics and health care industries.

Currently, CIGI maintains the most extensive bulk tanker fleet in the industry. Its tanker fleet delivery capability can reach up to 200,000 Nm^3 per day. With a dedicated team of well-trained engineers and operators to maintain its on-site facilities, CIGI also provides a 24-hour response team tasked to attend to emergency service requirements of its on-site plants. A total gas solutions provider, CIGI offers diversified products and services for its valued clients and partners in the automotive, steel and fabrication, manufacturing, semiconductor, food and health industries

CIGI has the most number of nitrogen on-site facilities in the Philippines that provide customers with reliable supply. These facilities, which produce a combined capacity of 327 TPD of liquid nitrogen, are supported by a team of engineers and operators assigned at the sites. The plants are likewise equipped with a liquid nitrogen back-up system to ensure uninterrupted N_2 supply to the customer.



top:
CIGI's Apalit ASU produces 145 TPD of liquid oxygen and 235 TPD of liquid nitrogen. The capacity optimization will free-up 50 TPD more from the plant.



right:
Our staff are trained using interactive learning based on up-to-date industry standards.

CIGI is capable of producing more than 100-million cubic meters of gas per year from its production sites. With the combined ASU and on-site capacities, CIGI remains to be the largest industrial gas company in Philippines.

CIGI will soon be ISO 9001: 2000-certified. The ISO upgrade will mean added value to customers and the business. This will encourage CIGI to improve management control, business process, and training effectiveness; consistency, efficiency, and establish a foundation for continuous improvement for the end goal of increasing customer satisfaction. CIGI is a wholly owned BOC operating company in the Philippines. The BOC Group is one of the world's leading providers of gas and related products, health care and vacuum technology and supply chain solutions.

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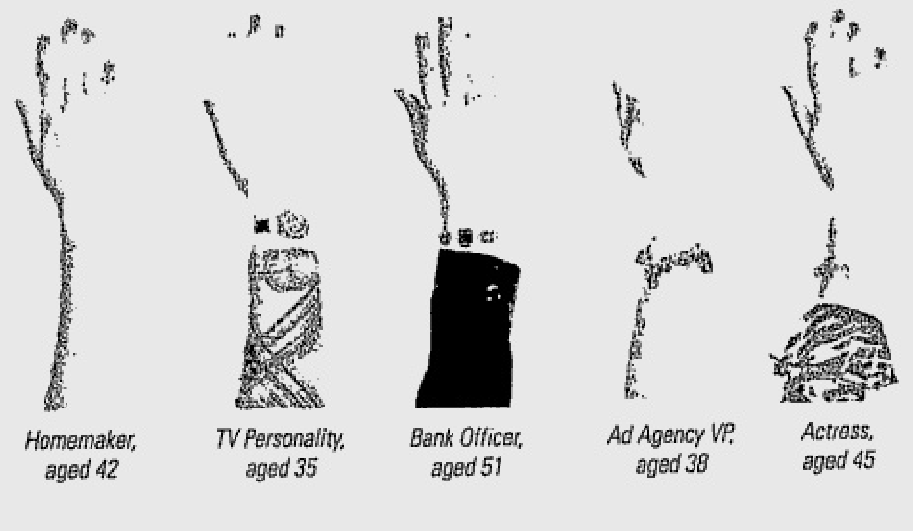

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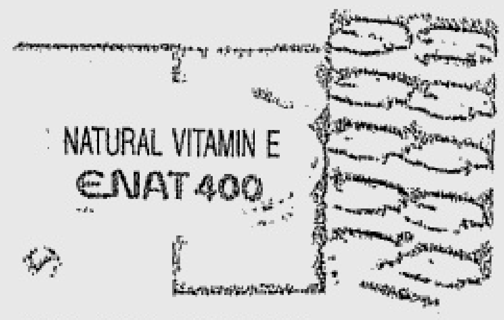

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AN ARRESTED Palestinian is placed at a military jeep at Karni checkpoint, at the border between Israel and the Gaza Strip, during a military operation in the al-Bureij refugee camp in the Gaza Strip Sept. 25. The Israeli army killed four Palestinians in separate pre-dawn raids in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which also left six soldiers injured, security sources on both sides said. AFP

27 Israeli pilots refuse 'illegal, immoral' raids

JERUSALEM—Twenty-seven Israeli pilots said on Wednesday they would refuse to carry out operations in the Palestinian territories, an Israeli air force officer said.

The pilots sent a letter to the Israeli air force commander declaring their refusal to carry out duties, which include track-and-kill operations, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

"We, veteran pilots and active pilots alike... are opposed to carrying out illegal and immoral attacks, of the type carried out by Israel in the territories," one of the pilots told Israel's Channel 2 television.

"We, who have been educated to love the state of Israel... refuse to take part in air force attacks in civilian population centers. We... refuse to continue harming innocent civilians," one of the pilots told Channel 2.

The television station said almost half of those who signed the petition were flying missions once or twice a week. Israeli reserve pilots can be called upon to fly in military operations.

"We are talking of 27 pilots out of thousands," air force commander Major-General Dan Halutz told Israel Radio, apparently referring to active, reserve and retired pilots.

Air force Brig. Gen. Ido Nehushtan told Reuters the 27 were a "marginal, small group."

Israel's army chief, Moshe Ya'alon, said the pilots, who include senior reserve officers in the air force, could be punished for what he called their illegitimate and forbidden statement.

"If we'll need to take steps (against them), we'll take them... We have to examine the matter," he told Channel 2.

Israel has killed 12 Hamas militants in air strikes in the Gaza Strip since a Hamas suicide bombing killed 23 people in Jerusalem on Aug. 19.

Several bystanders have also been killed in the attacks, which Israel has used to assassinate top Palestinian leaders from the militant group.

Israel has an active group of conscientious objectors who have refused to serve in Palestinian territories, but the letter marks the first time that pilots protested in a separate group.

Israeli servicemen can be jailed for refusing to carry out orders. *Reuters*

Freshman opens fire at US high school

COLD SPRING, Minnesota—A freshman opened fire at a high school, killing one student and critically wounding a second before a teacher apparently talked the boy into dropping the gun, authorities said.

The suspect was taken into custody Wednesday after the late-morning shooting at Rocori High School in Cold Spring, a small town about 100 km northwest of the Twin Cities.

Police said the 15-year-old boy, who was not identified, was cooperating with authorities, but the motive was not immediately known.

Police Chief Phil Jones said "there was chaos" as police arrived at the school. One of the students was shot while in the weight room and the other shooting occurred in the gym.

Aaron Rollins, a senior, died at a hospital after being shot in the neck. Seth Bartell, a freshman, was in critical condition with gunshot wounds to the chest and head.

Officials evacuated the school and sent all students home. Education Department spokesman Doug Gray said it appeared to be Minnesota's first fatal shooting carried out by a student inside a school.

"There was kids crying," Jamie Toddingham, a junior, told KSTP-TV. "We were sitting at a window where we could see cops everywhere. I was just thinking about, it could've been me." *AP*

Rough draft of genetic makeup of dog completed

WASHINGTON—Man's best friend, in this case a male poodle, is genetically more similar to humans than is the mouse, a more commonly used laboratory animal, according to researchers who have completed the first rough draft sequence of the genes of a dog.

Since the start in recent years of intense genetic sequencing, more than 150 species, mostly bacteria, have been completed, but the study appearing this week in the journal Science is the first for a companion animal.

A standard size poodle named Shadow, the family pet of gene researcher J. Craig Venter, provided the specimen that researchers at The Institute for Genomic Research and the Center for Advancement of Genomics used to sequence the canine genes.

"Shadow is now one of history's most valuable dogs," said Venter, founder of both institutions and leader of one of the two teams that first sequenced the human genome.

The rough draft shows dogs have about 2.4 billion base pairs of DNA, or about half a billion fewer than humans.

Ewen F. Kirkness of the institute for Genomic Research, the first author of the study, said that genetic sequence is important for medical research because dogs share about 360 of the same genetic disorders that are known in humans.

Dogs, he said, are second only to humans in the thoroughness of medical understanding and research.

Also, Kirkness said the dog is much more genetically similar to humans than is the mouse, even though mice and humans are closer together on the tree of evolution.

All mammals, at one point, had a common ancestor. But dogs are known to have diverged toward an independent species about 95 million years ago. The mouse and humans both diverged about 87 million years ago, making mice closer to humans in time. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Iran defies UN nuke watchdog

NEW YORK—With UN monitors poised to make fresh inspections, Iran defied the United Nations' nuclear watchdog Wednesday, insisting that it would not bow to international demands to give up its uranium enrichment activities. Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi said in New York that his country wanted to produce enriched uranium to avoid reliance on supplies of nuclear fuel from Russia—which is building Iran's first nuclear reactor. "It's a matter of national pride to have this capability, this technology especially when it's produced domestically. This does not mean that producing (nuclear) weapons will be on our agenda," he told a business and security forum. *AFP*

Indonesia to buy 2 South Korea subs

JAKARTA—Indonesia plans to buy two submarines from South Korea as part of its plan to upgrade the country's aging naval fleet, the navy said Thursday. Last Friday Indonesian armed forces commander Gen. Endriartono Sutarto said the aging naval fleet would be upgraded with the purchase of submarines and destroyers, but he did not reveal where the equipment would come from. *AFP*

Singaporeans question alien workers' role

SINGAPORE—More Singaporeans are questioning the role played by foreign workers in the city-state amid a long economic downturn and rising unemployment, a Gallup survey showed Thursday. The survey of more than 1,000 working Singaporeans and permanent residents showed that 56 percent still believed that "foreign talent" is necessary for the country to achieve economic success. However, that number was sharply down from 72 percent in 1997 and 64 percent in 2001, according to the latest survey carried out from Aug. 27 to Sept. 3. "In the past, Singaporeans have been very positive about the role that foreign talent has played in driving the success of the Singapore economy but this is showing signs of decline," Gallup said in a statement. "Given the double whammy of an economic slowdown and rising unemployment, it is perhaps to be expected that more Singaporeans are now questioning the impact that foreign talent has in shoring up the nation's future success," said Gallup regional practice coordinator Ashok Gopal. *AFP*

Pinay wife, daughter share tycoon's wealth

From page A1

legal claim to millions of dollars in assets inherited by her father's maid-turned-wife Rose Porteous.

Philippine-born Porteous filed a countersuit against Rinehart, who is one of Australia's richest women.

Hancock's estate is worth more than 400 million Australian dollars ($268 million).

In a statement issued jointly through their lawyers on Thursday, the two women said they were "walking away from" the litigation.

Further details of the truce were not released, but it is expected that Porteous will keep the 50 million Australian dollars ($40 million) in assets given to her by Hancock during their seven-year marriage. Rinehart will likely retain 20 million Australian dollars (US$13.4 million) a year in royalties from her late father's iron ore concerns.

Cleared

The ceasefire follows a coroner's ruling in April 2002 on Hancock's death in 1992 at age 82 which cleared Porteous of any involvement.

An autopsy had concluded he died of heart disease and renal failure, but Rinehart refused to accept the conclusion and demanded the coroner's inquiry. Rinehart implied that Porteous, whom Hancock married in 1985, was responsible.

Hancock was 76 at the time of the wedding, his bride 40 years his junior.

After marrying Hancock, Porteous became one of the best-known socialites in Perth, a wealthy city 3,200 km west of Sydney. A former pantyhose model, she threw lavish parties and donated generously to charities.

However, Rinehart claimed that behind the doors of the couple's opulent mansion, Porteous was a domineering wife who constantly badgered Hancock for money—thereby hastening his death. *AP*

PDI FILE PHOTO

AUSTRALIAN millionaire's widow Rose Lacson-Porteus announces a ceasefire in a bitter war against stepdaughter over US$268-M estate.

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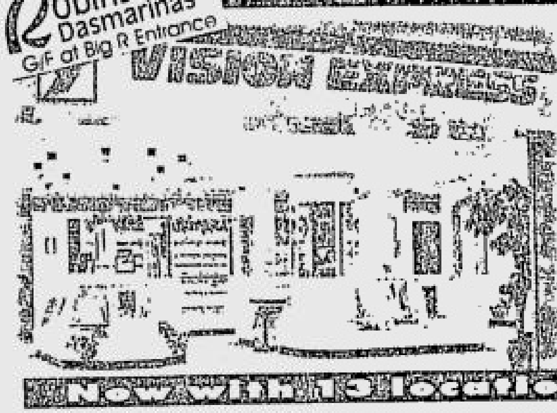

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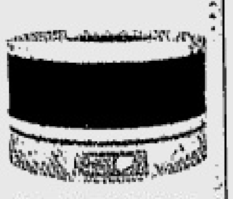

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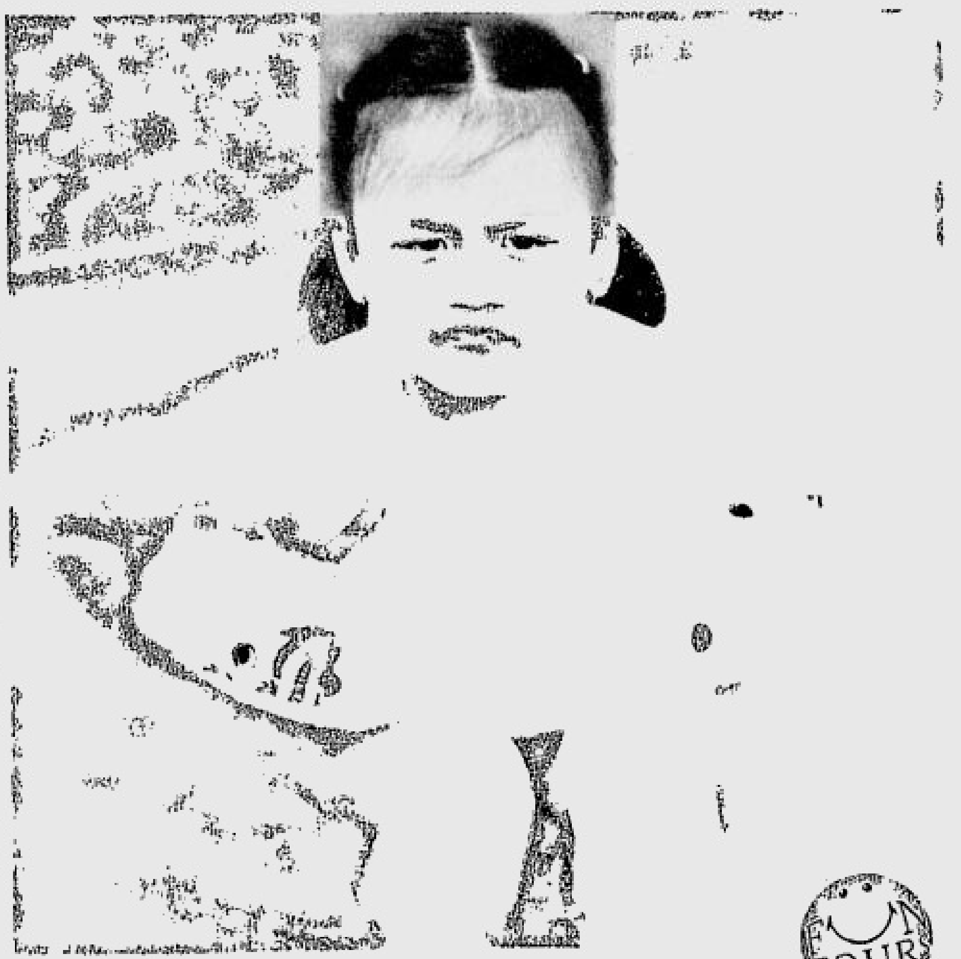

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OPINION

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EDITORIALS

Quick renunciation

IF THERE is one iron rule every institution adheres to, it is the one that prohibits conflict of interest. Thus, it is very disappointing to learn that at least one lawmaker who has been pushing hard for legislation that would compensate the victims of human rights stands to profit from the measure.

J.V. Bautista of Sanlakas pointed out this anomaly recently when he challenged his fellow party-list representative, Etta Rosales of Akbayan, to give up her claim for compensation. "I do not believe, as a human rights victim myself, that she should receive something for the work that she has done as a member of Congress," Bautista said. "She should not benefit from a law that she has co-authored. She should renounce (her monetary claim)."

Rosales is one of almost 10,000 victims of human rights abuses during martial law who had filed a class suit against Ferdinand Marcos and his estate in the early 1990s before the United States Federal District Court of Honolulu. In 1995, Judge Manuel Real awarded $2 billion to the victims.

Last month, the Philippine Supreme Court unanimously declared that the $683 million once deposited in different Swiss banks and now held in escrow by the Philippine National Bank was ill-gotten wealth and awarded the money to the Philippine government. A bill has been filed in the House of Representatives setting aside $200 million from that money for compensation of the human rights victims.

Aside from Bautista and Rosales, there are two other members of the House who may benefit from the legislation: Representatives Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran of Bayan. But both have waived their claim for compensation. Rosales really ought to follow suit quickly, if only out of *delicadeza*.

It was Rosales who also proposed that the compensation package be shared by all human rights victims, not only by those who suffered under martial law. While at first blush this proposal sounds noble and magnanimous, it has raised a lot of questions, foremost among which is how all the victims are to be identified. The process promises to be very cumbersome and difficult. By the time the list is completed, few of the victims may still be around to get their money.

The Rosales proposal also looks ironic, considering that she led the group which broke away from the much larger group of plaintiffs and called itself Claimants 1081. The proposal tends to categorize the case as purely a human rights issue, relegating Marcos to a bit player in the tragic drama of continuing human rights violations. Its effect would be to dissociate the name of Marcos from human rights violations and make people forget his sins against the Filipino people. Rosales seems to have forgotten that the class suit was precisely filed because of Marcos' human rights violations during the time Proclamation 1081 was in force.

Swift resolution

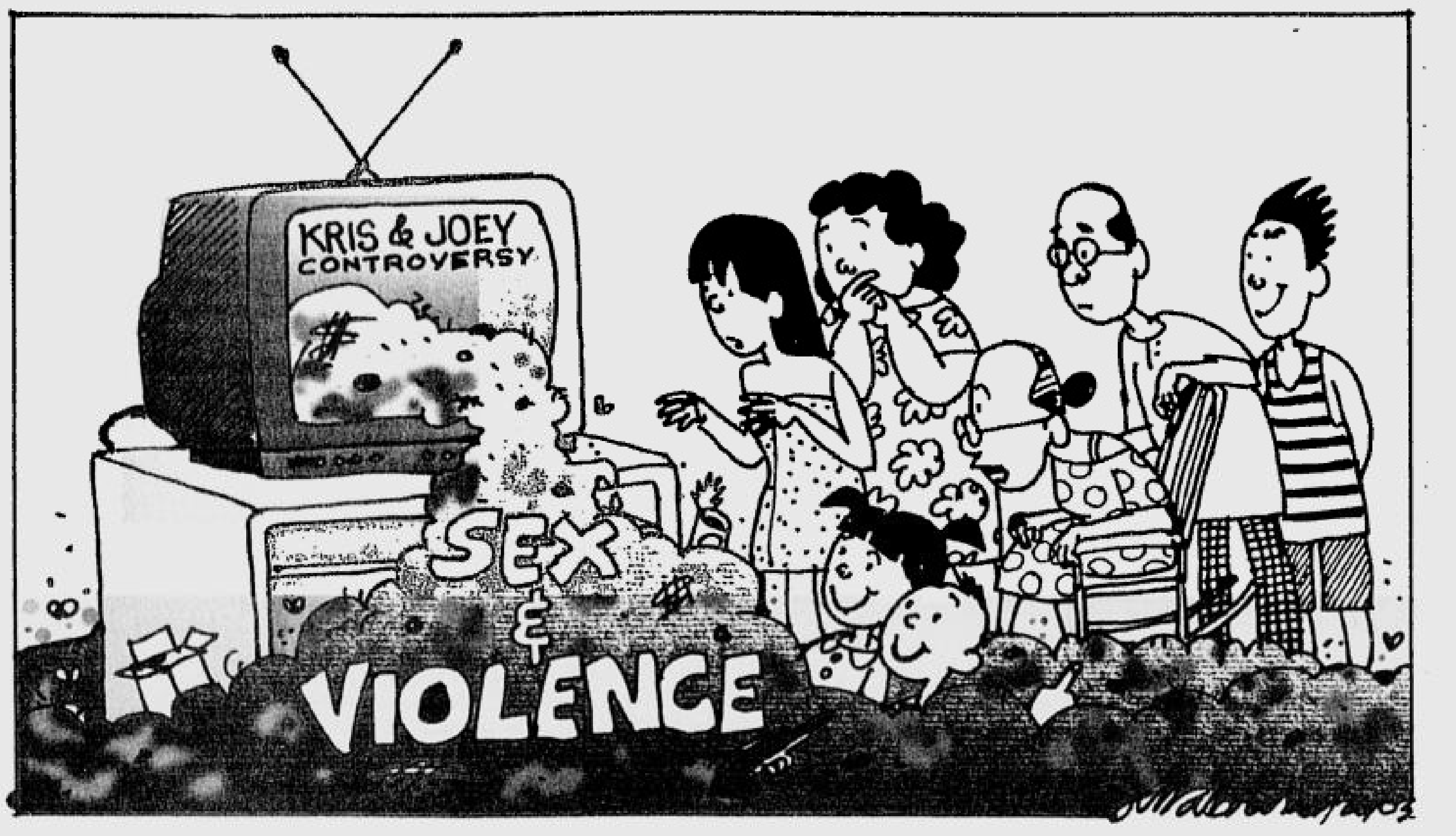
WITH HELP from its American lawyer, Robert Swift, Claimants 1081 and the Marcoses have sealed a deal pruning down the compensation from $2 billion to $150 million. Worse, the agreement would have freed the Marcoses of any further liabilities, criminal or civil. Although the deal was approved by the Estrada administration, it was struck down as unconstitutional by the Sandiganbayan. The Macapagal administration has refused to honor it.

Last Sept. 2, in a decision that infringes on Philippine sovereignty, Real imposed a worldwide freeze on the $683-million Marcos loot and threatened to cite for obstruction of justice any person or financial institution that would do so. At the same time, Real reinstated the settlement agreed upon by Claimants 1081 and the Marcoses, saying he wanted to make sure that the victims got their money.

As a result of the freeze, the Singapore branch of the German bank West LB, where the PNB invested some $22 million from the Marcos loot, has announced that it would hold on to the money until a Singaporean court orders its release.

Some Filipino officials have accused Swift of colluding with the Marcoses to block the release of the $683 million to the government. Maybe. But what is becoming increasingly clear is that Swift is only interested in protecting his own stake in the case.

Rosales and Claimants 1081 should now consider dismissing him as their counsel. With no victim to represent, whom will Swift ask Real to protect with an injunction? Then perhaps both the government and the victims can finally lay their hands on every dollar due them.



The Kris and Joey show

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

"WHEN lovers quarrel, the heavens weep."

In the Philippines, the voyeurs sit entranced before television sets to watch the lovers pour their hearts out on two long-time rival TV stations. I don't know why the networks have to import *telenovelas* when we have our very own soap-operas—more gripping and dramatic, *at totoo pa*. In fact, the Kris and Joey show eclipsed the *chinovelas* "Meteor Garden" and the initial episode of the new Taiwanese soap opera "Love Scar" Wednesday night.

ABS-CBN went overtime with the news program "TV Patrol" to air the whole interview with Kris Aquino by Korina Sanchez. Almost half of the news program was broadcast live from the home of President Corazon Aquino on Times Street, Quezon City. At the same time, Mayor Joey Marquez was airing his side from GMA 7.

I think the only person who is happy about this sorry episode is Nandy Pacheco of the Gunless Society. For the whole mess clearly shows one more example of the pitfalls of having a gun. The last straw that prompted Kris to leave Joey forever (?) was when the latter pointed a handgun at her and cocked it. She said that she and Joey have had many other fights before, almost once a week, but she always wanted to make things right. She said there were many times they were about to break up but she begged him to "work it out."

"I loved him and... I wanted the relationship to work," she said. "*Pero tinutukan niya ako ng baril kaya napilitan akong tumakbo sa pamilya ko.*"

If Joey didn't have a gun, he wouldn't have anything to point at Kris, *'di ba*? Then this latest lovers' quarrel would have ended like the earlier ones, with them trying to work things out and go back into each other's arms. Kris could bear the physical and verbal abuse, but not being threatened with a gun. So the crux was the gun. No gun, no problem. Have gun, big problem. *Tama ba*, Nandy?

Whether or not you pull the trigger—as did Rolito Go and others like him now languishing in prison—you are in big trouble. Joey did not pull the trigger, thank God, but he is still in double jeopardy. He not only faces a jail term, but also a defeat in the forthcoming congressional elections.

Joey and Kris are both losers here. The clear winner is, would you believe? Mike Arroyo. The lovers' scandal pushed the Jose Pidal scandal out of the headlines and the front pages. The Ping vs. Mike show has been replaced by the Kris vs. Joey show in the consciousness of the people. In fact, the joke is that Big Mike masterminded the breakup of the two precisely to make people forget the Jose Pidal case. Mike has not only one pseudonym but two, they say. The other one is "Mariz." It was a text message from this "Mariz" that drove Kris to jealousy and triggered the row. "Mariz" is obviously a code name, the reports said. Besides Jose Pidal, "Mariz" is also Mike, the jokes say.

Who is telling the truth and who is lying, Kris or Joey? Since neither of them has been hit by lightning—yet—the Filipino voyeurs will be split. You have watched them on television; you have read the extended newspaper accounts; the Today newspaper even printed a transcript of Kris' interview by Korina. What do you think? Who do you think is lying? This requires no less than a poll. This is the type of silly question that is just right for such shows as "Debate" which should boost GMA in the ratings game. But ABS-CBN can always come back by putting Kris and Joey face to face on TV. That will really break all ratings records because many Filipinos are just incurable gossips and Peeping Toms.

In fact, Kris suggested that she and Joey both undergo lie detector tests on TV. Is Joey willing to go through that? I think that's the surest and fastest way to determine who is lying. Lawyers and judges will tell you that you can have an indication of whether or not a witness is lying by his or her demeanor and by the way he or she answers questions. So I noted that while Kris was forthright in her answers to Korina's questions, Joey was sometimes hesitant to Arnold Clavio's questions.

"*Umaarte lang 'yan. Artista 'yan eh,*" quipped some obviously pro-Joey viewers. If Kris was only acting, then she has disproved the comments that she is a bad actress. If she was only acting in the ABS-CBN interview, then she deserves an award for best acting.

Besides, there were things she revealed that a person who is acting and lying need not make public. Would Kris have admitted that she acquired a sexually transmitted disease from Joey if she were only lying? What would be her purpose for saying that if she were lying?

What I did observe was that in the 24 hours between the Tuesday quarrel and her Wednesday televised confession, Kris has matured. The youngest daughter of former President Aquino and the martyred Ninoy Aquino had always seemed to many a spoiled and conceited brat. What's more, she has the knack for falling madly in love with married men.

Last Wednesday, she admitted her mistakes. She admitted she was "*tanga, gaga* and *boba*." She apologized to her Mom who once told her "that for somebody so intelligent, *bakit pagdating sa lalaki, sobra kang bobo*?" She apologized to her son Joshua whom she had neglected "because of her love for Joey." She also apologized to actress Alma Moreno, Joey's estranged wife, and their children. "If I hadn't entered the picture, maybe you could have reconciled," Kris said.

"Does she still have any love for Joey?" Korina asked her.

"I will be lying if I said I didn't," Kris replied.

Shakespeare could have been referring to Kris when he wrote: "She loved not wisely but too well."

Lightning bolts

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I TAKE back what I said yesterday. That was that GMA is relatively safe because God no longer sends lightning bolts at those who use his name in vain. No sooner had she, or her handlers, suggested that God wanted her to run—she was seeking divine guidance, they said, which is the same thing because that divine guidance was guaranteed to lead to God goading her to run—than God did send a lightning bolt at her.

That was in the form of a Pulse Asia survey that showed her lowest approval rating ever since she took office in 2001. The day before, I watched Jose de Venecia perorate on TV that GMA had to run because she was good for the country. She was brilliant, she was experienced and she was wanted by the people. He was saying this as though they had not already hatched the plan. The results of the latest Pulse Asia survey must give even him pause.

They are pretty crushing. The main figures suggest so: GMA's approval rating fell from 51 percent last August to 40 percent this month. Public trust for her fell from 44 percent nationwide to 36 percent for the same period. Many of those who approved of her before now express indecision, while the number of those who disapproved of her outright grew.

The survey does not mention the effect of the Jose Pidal exposé on her approval or trust rating, but the Metro Manila figures suggest so. The steepest drop came from Metro Manila respondents—15 points—and specifically from the poorest elements (Class E)—21 points. The latter suggests as well that the poorest of the poor saw their quality of life, such as it might be called that, worsen.

The only seemingly good news is that GMA's trust rating did not fall significantly in Mindanao. But that comes from the really bad news that her trust rating there was already in the pits, to begin with, for reasons that are not hard to understand. Otherwise, in all geographic areas and in all socioeconomic sectors her ratings fell to an all-time low.

At the same time—and this has made me a believer in the idea that God has rediscovered lightning as a means to punish people who invoke his name for ungodly purposes—George Bush Jr. has also gotten a pummeling from Americans. His ratings took a dive too in the latest CNN/Gallup poll, released uncannily at the same time the Pulse Asia survey was. The nationwide survey showed only 50 percent of Americans now approved of him, compared with 71 percent in April and 59 percent in August. Of the registered voters among the respondents, only 46 percent said they would vote for Bush. Some 49 percent said they would vote for Wesley Clark, an ex-Army general and Democratic hopeful.

Significantly, Bush's disapproval rating hit a new high of 47 percent, up from only 36 percent in early August. The Iraq invasion, the one factor that had catapulted Bush to unprecedented popularity early this year, was the same thing that plunged him to record lows. Only half of Americans now approve of the Iraq invasion, compared to 63 only a few weeks ago, in late August. The costs of the war moreover—$100 billion for the first year alone—have exacerbated feelings of resentment against the government, given the extent of current unemployment, which is the highest in 10 years.

Like GMA, Bush has been saying it was God that bade him go against the UN and invade Iraq despite the fact that His, or the UN's, representative on earth, Hans Blix, had been saying Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. Bush hasn't found one to this day. God has not been known to like liars.

I did say in a column last Aug. 27 that when Bush comes to the Philippines next month, it will be "a meeting between two losers." At the time I said it, Newsweek had already hinted at the shape of things to come. Bush's ratings were going down, less than half of Americans said they would vote for him if elections were held then. Though they did not say whom they would prefer instead. The latest CNN/Gallup pretty much clinches it. As does the Pulse Asia survey: It will be a meeting of two losers. To pat themselves in the back for ruining their respective countries and the world.

At that, you don't know if Bush will suddenly find an excuse to forego his visit here or to make it a hello-and-goodbye thing at the airport. Losers do not want to be seen with other losers.

One can only pray—literally, truly these are days of miracle and wonder—that GMA in particular will really seek divine guidance and heed it. Though if you go by the principle "*vox populi, vox Dei*," the voice of the people is the voice of God, she need not seek it any further. The people, and therefore God, have spoken. And their message is not unlike the one the people used against her father, Diosdado. That was: "*Alis dyan*."

Unfortunately, power has a way of insulating people. Bush's retinue has already dismissed the CNN/Gallup poll results, saying there will be more surveys to come between now and next year's elections. Doubtless, GMA's hangers-on are telling her the same thing. It is a testament only to the fact that power conjures its own reason for being, even if it has to shut out the world for it. A friend of mine who worked for the Erap government tells me that was how it was during its last days too. Even as the citizens filled up at Edsa, Ronaldo Puno was telling Erap not to worry, they had won, the Senate had voted not to open the second envelope. Well, it's Puno advising GMA too.

The Greeks did know a thing or two about divine signs and divine retribution. They said: Whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make crazy.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

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He wields a mean bolo

COMMENTARY

John J. Carroll
Institute on Church and Social Issues

IN HER documentary film, "Ang Pinakatagong Lihim ng Simbahan," Edita ("Ditsi") Carolino, caught Gaudencio Rosales, then bishop of Malaybalay, in action. He was out with his priests planting trees, a monthly activity to dramatize their concern about the destruction of the forests in the Province of Bukidnon. The tree-planting was not merely symbolic; the bishop was swinging away lustily with a bolo to clear the underbrush while the priests dug and planted. As the camera focused on him, he stood up and spoke not only of deforestation but of the control by big corporations of the agricultural land of the province, to the exclusion of small farmers—a situation which he saw as totally contradictory to the social teaching of the Church.

Nor did the bishop's activism end with tree-planting. Distressed by the ineffectiveness of the DENR in implementing the total log ban in Bukidnon, for which the Church there had lobbied, he allowed his priests to be deputized as forest wardens—to watch the roads at night and impound illegally-cut logs. One consequence of this was the ambush and murder of one of his priests—Fr. Nery Satur—who had been active in the campaign. The bishop, deeply saddened by the murder and by the unwillingness of local authorities to follow up some very evident leads to the perpetrators, later wrote a small book as his testimony to the fallen priest—the second to be murdered in Bukidnon. The book was entitled "Fr. Nery Satur And The Church He Died For," by Bishop Dency B. Rosales (Claretian Publications, 1997). For those who would know the heart of the man, this is essential reading.

In her documentary, Carolino shows the lifeless body of Father Nery, still bloodied and lying on a *banig* in a small rural chapel near where he had been killed; then a long procession of protest moving through the town of Malaybalay and climaxing in an outdoor Mass celebrated by Bishop Rosales and his priests.

As Archbishop Rosales prepares to step into the large shoes of Jaime Cardinal Sin, "prophets" are busy scrutinizing his background for clues as to what kind of leadership he will provide for the Church of Manila. "He will be an environmentalist," proclaim some who are aware of his record in Bukidnon; and surely, though Manila has no forests, it has need of serious environmental concern. "He will fight globalization," say others, noting his participation in a recent meeting on the latter; again, especially in view of the failure of the Cancun Conference, there is need for reflection and action on that front. "He will concern himself with the formation of the clergy" is a third prophecy, by those who remember his years as Rector of the San Carlos Seminary—and indeed there is need for that.

Still others point to his promotion of micro-finance for the poor as archbishop of Lipa. Obviously his concern for the poor will have a vast scope in the City of Manila with its 63,243 persons per square kilometer (Manhattan Island, the most densely populated part of the United States, had a density of 26,987 in the year 2000), as well as those in Mandaluyong (29,943 per sq km), Pasay (25,351), Makati (24,310) and San Juan (19,613). A research done on the urban poor of Metro Manila indicates not only a spirituality which is very deep and reflects the pain in their lives—reminding one of the *anawim*, the simple people of the land in the Old Testament who relied on God because they had no one to rely on. It is a spirituality only loosely connected to the sacramental life of the Church; yet there is a desire very often expressed by the poor that Church people visit them, get to know them and to understand their problems. Here too is a demand, and perhaps the most fundamental one, on the time and energy of the new archbishop.

How Archbishop Rosales will apportion his time and energy—the four yeas which he has before reaching retirement age—among these and other demands, I surely cannot say. Perhaps he himself cannot say at this time. But some thoughts do come to mind.

First, there is the observation of Peter Drucker, a guru among students of management, that there is one thing certain these days in the choice of executives: the challenges which they face will not be the ones anticipated at the time they were chosen.

Second, is the fact that Rosales is very obviously a spiritual man, a man of prayers. Thus, we may anticipate that whatever choices he makes, whatever priorities he sets, will be dictated by the Spirit of the Lord whom he meets in prayer and by the needs of his people as he sees them, than by the prophecies echoing around him.

Thirdly, leadership in the Church is often a balancing act: the successor even of a great Pope or bishop emphasizes aspects of the ministry which were relatively neglected by his predecessor and de-emphasizes somewhat those which were prominent in the former's ministry. If this holds true, we may expect Archbishop Rosales to be less involved in national politics than was Cardinal Sin.

Yet, let politicians who may be glad to have the cardinal off their backs beware of going too far. The archbishop wields a mean *bolo*!

Good women, bad choices

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I HOPE mothers watched Kris Aquino's explosive revelations with their daughters, if only to point out how smart, articulate and indeed accomplished women, who do most everything right, can allow their personal lives to go so wrong.

"I hope you're learning from this, girl," I told my daughter as we gaped at the TV set, holding our collective breath with every dramatic revelation that Kris let slip. I had earlier agreed to appear in "Debate," if only to articulate the women's point-of-view on the issue of violence against women. But when Kris let loose with the bombshell that her ex-boyfriend had infected her with a sexually transmitted disease, she became not just the latest survivor of domestic violence to go public, but also an object lesson on loving the wrong man and on protecting oneself from the consequences of unprotected sex.

My hope is that Kris will eventually snap out of her currently relentless focus on her personal problems, and come to view her situation within the context of other women's problems, and on the situation of Filipino women generally.

For she has so much more in common with ordinary Pinays than she might think. She is living her problems out large, every heartache and rejection, embarrassment and disgrace played out in the glare of the media spotlight, scrutinized by every office worker, taxi driver or salesgirl who happened to watch her the other night.

But in her foolishness, or as she put it, her "*katangahan,*" in the face of a romantic entanglement, Kris is like every other Filipino woman, raised to aspire for martyrdom and living sainthood that, so society teaches, is the crowning glory of womanhood.

But in her determination to seek justice for herself and wreak vengeance on the man who has done her wrong, Kris has gone against the grain. True, not every battered woman has the extraordinary access to media that she enjoys. And not even the most horrific stories of abuse can command the same feverish obsession that she seems to inspire. But she has already done Filipino women the great service of showing abusive men that there are limits to their power, and that no amount of jealousy, nagging or *kakulitan* can ever justify violence, abuse and threatening a woman's life.

* * *

OF COURSE, she could have come out and talked about the abuse earlier.

As she told Korina Sanchez, their last fight was not the first time Joey Marquez raised his hand in anger against her. And that in fact when friends asked her the reason for her bruises, she would try to explain them away.

But in this she was being typical. Many a battered woman would have put up with the abuse for long periods—years even—before working up the courage to tell others about it, seek help, and eventually walk away from the dysfunctional relationship.

Kris appears to be the very model of a woman who enjoys every advantage save one: a strong enough belief in herself and her self-worth that would enable her to sense danger when it comes wrapped in an attractive masculine package.

It is true that the checkered course of her love life has shown Kris to have an unfortunate penchant for choosing the "wrong" kind of men, or at least men who did not deserve the kind of love she offered. But I hope that she will also take this latest public scandal as a sign that perhaps the problem lies not in loving the wrong men, but in not loving herself enough, at least not enough to stop herself from making really bad choices.

* * *

ONE of the things I most appreciated in Kris was her honesty, extreme honesty to the point of being called tactless. And part of the "*taklesa*" image was her refusal to confine herself to a "wholesome" image, offering her less-than-perfect record in relationships as part of the overall package.

But I'm afraid for young women who, watching Kris declare that she had allowed herself to be humiliated, hurt and debased because she loved Joey too well, delude themselves into thinking that it's "romantic" to be a fool for love. Kris' unmade-up, teary and traumatized countenance should tell all young women out there that having your life threatened by the man you love is in no way romantic.

* * *

FINALLY, thank you, Kris, for making public that Joey not just slapped and pushed you around, but also infected you with a sexually transmitted disease.

This is a secret that women bring to their graves, and in many cases, quite literally, with some dying as a result of a disease their husbands "gifted" them with. I can't help but gnash my teeth at women who declare proudly that they don't care about their partners' philandering "as long I'm the one he comes home to." Well, he may be bringing home a sexually transmitted disease as well.

It's a real dilemma for many women, who may be faithful and monogamous but end up getting infected by their unfaithful, irresponsible partners. Then they find that they can't even bring themselves to seek treatment, deeply embarrassed and shamed through no fault of theirs, but simply as a consequence of society's sexual double standard.

Kris has never apologized for her sexuality, or for the ease with which she falls in love. But while we may admire her for her great heart and courage in risking all for the sake of a man, we might also do well to reflect on whether there shouldn't indeed be boundaries to passion and recklessness. When these endanger health, sanity, family or life, a good woman should begin evaluating her choices, and making better ones for a change.

Friar accounts

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

READING 16th-century friar accounts of the Philippines and the Filipinos, one feels uneasy about the way they seem to see the hand of God in everything. Having read Teodoro Agoncillo who couldn't reconcile a loving God with the spiritual and temporal conquest of the Philippines by Spain. Even Rizal was critical of friar chronicles and chose to annotate the 1609 book of a layman, Antonio de Morga, when he formed our view of Philippine history in 1890. Friar accounts are more engaging as ethnographic reports rather than history and say a lot about both sides—the people they are describing and the mind-set of the friar. In the case of *anitos*, the Jesuit Pedro Chirino writes about the devil in a way so alien to us today. Regarding *catalonan* or priestesses in Taytay he said:

"If any of those women died, she appointed an heir, and successor—to whom, after she had been accepted and received, her idol was brought in great silence by some chiefs, from the house of the dead person, in the middle of the night. Then they celebrated a feast during three continuous days, with banqueting and abundance of wine, which is their greatest solemnity. The idol of the chief priestess was made of gold and she kept it in concealment, through the contrivance of the Devil (who through it held close communication with her), in a part of her house where it was most difficult to find it.

"It is estimated that for two years this secret pestilence had been going on, tyrannizing over the inhabitants to such a degree that there was hardly a sick person whom they did not attend with all diligence—persuading each one to demand urgently that they should cast lots to ascertain whether the sick man were to live or die, and, consequently, whether sacrifice should be offered to the *anito* for his health. We have already explained the manner of sacrifices and offerings they made, and the profit and gain which these infernal furies derived from them. There was one woman among them who cleared, in the short time that I have mentioned, almost 300 *escudos*; but she did not enjoy them long, for God would not allow the conflagration to spread further. His divine Majesty influenced some of his faithful ones, who, all aflame with the greater conflagration of His honor and service, hastened to give account of what they heard and saw and knew of this matter.

"With the help of this information beginning among the weaker members of the band, in a short time they succeeded in discovering those of secondary rank—and this, step by step, they reached the chief priestess herself. Their second care (which they put into execution) was to take away from these people the idols, a great number of which were seized. Some of these were of clay, others of wood; and two in particular, were made from two great teeth of the cayman, set in gold, in which metal the head of the *anito* was shaped at the point of the tooth." The gold was taken and placed "in the service of the church" whatever that means. Used for supplies? Or was the gold melted and made into sacred vessels? The *anito* of the head priestess could not be found despite diligent searches in her houses:

"The idol had promised her, so she said, that they should never find it, even if they should tear down and destroy the house; consequently, it enjoined her not to fear the father who was conducting this search, or any of his agents or helpers; for it was more powerful than any of them. But as God is indeed more powerful, He influenced the faithful and zealous heart of Fr. Diego de Santiago to decide that he would not relax or give up the search for this demon until he should find it. Being quite certain that it was in the house (although he had already searched there for it several times), he returned for the last time with the determination to demolish the house, and to examine every part of it, piece by piece, to see if by chance he might find the idol hidden in some hole. Before setting about this task, his glance fell upon a cane prop—old, weather-beaten, and stained by smoke—which from the joist of the house, supported the ridgepole of the roof: this is the mode of construction used for strengthening the houses. I do not know what he saw in that prop, but he immediately ordered it to be cut down and its contents to be examined. This time, 'he who was more powerful than all others' was overcome; for, being found like all the rest, and the gold being removed for the service of the church, this idol went, with the others, into the fire.

"The demon was so insulted and hurt at this trick that, not being able to wreak any other vengeance, he began (accompanied by many others) the following night to torment the poor *catalona* with visions and cruel threats. Already undeceived as to the weakness of her idol, she sought conversion, and, hating the demon, begged for mercy. With the help of a cross that was given her as a defense, although the terror continued, the threats were not put in execution; and finally the demon abandoned her as she had him."

This has all the earmarks of a B-rate horror film today but in the 16th-century it was very real indeed. Historians separate fact from fiction and try to reconstruct a part of our pre-colonial past.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Ancestor worship

HIGH BLOOD

Asuncion David Maramba

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

WHEN people found out that both my parents were still alive in their 90s and living with me for the longest time, they'd look at me with almost reverent mien and say "How blessed you are"; "God will shower you with blessings"; "How lucky you are."

I didn't feel lucky. In their late 80s and into their 90s, my parents drove me up the wall. How can I say a thing like that! Ancestor worship runs deep in our culture and nobody talks ill about parents, especially aging parents. We revere them; we care for them till they die; we brag that we never but never commit them to old folks' homes. Only in whispers and in intimate gut talk will adult children admit that their elders are making life miserable for them. Outwardly we pay tribute in word and action and allow them to preside like icons over the rest of our lives. My parents were "taking too long to die." Every encounter with them had become unpleasant.

In the beginning I kept my mouth shut before people who looked upon me as a saint. Then I just looked blank; then I started speaking up. "Look, let's be honest," I'd say. Aging is not always gracious and old people are not always "sweet creatures." I felt that to admit very "rough patches" among members of a family was nothing to be ashamed of. Old people can be demanding, cantankerous and capricious. As they approached their 90s, my parents had become difficult.

Then at 95, my mother had a mild fall. From then on, it was downhill for her. Age was overtaking her. My 97-year-old father physically protested her hospitalization. Around two weeks later I had him carried bodily into the car. He must see for himself that I was not such "a bad child" for bringing my mother to the hospital. That was the last time my parents saw each other. Back home, sad and lonely, my father slipped away while all of us had our eyes on my mother who "could go anytime." My father had wished that they could die together.

For five more months, my mother lingered. She was now back home, for everything that could be done in the hospital had been done. I had begun to lead the rosary for her every afternoon as I had done for my father in his last days. Quite unknown to me, I was going through a totally gratuitous healing—of my anger, my impatience, my resentment towards my parents.

Within the month after my father died, whenever I walked into my mother's room and saw her lying there, eyes closed, tube-fed, on oxygen round the clock; a wave of pity and a long-lost affection gently swept over me. "Take her, Lord," I prayed. "I am no longer angry." And close to my mother's ear I'd say, "You can go, Ma; we're all right. Your work is finished."

"Releasing" her like that struck me as ironic, for here lay old people that God couldn't seem to take away because they refused to die. And yet young people dropped dead like falling leaves, too soon and certainly against their will.

For four more months, God kept me on the watch before He released me, too. After my mother joined my father (on Sept. 22 four years ago) I dreamt of them and myself quite often—disturbing dreams in which they looked unbearably sad and sicker than they ever were in life. I told them so in the dreams, "Why do you look like this?" Waking up, I prayed for them, "Rest in peace." Finally such dreams passed away. Pleasant dreams took their place, with my parents looking fine and well, as they did before they aged. There they were, living with me again and making my life miserable again. Lightheartedly, I chided them, "Ma, we're not going through that again."

My healing has been a total gift from above. Without my asking, everything, the unpleasant memories have been washed away. In their place, every good memory of life with my mother and father arise; the most loving childhood memories: of my father making a Christmas tree out of a San Francisco bush branch right after Dec. 8, 1941, of the little native handbags he hung on it for my sister and me, of my mother taking me into her arms after an aborted trip to Laguna in which I would have been separated from her for the first time, Bud Abbott and Lou Costello at the Metropolitan Theater, refreshments at Aristocrat, my father driving us to school and back, my mother seeing to it that we had piano lessons—little things mostly, but now wrapped in great sentiment and affection.

Whenever I see a lean old man, I actually look at him and fondly remember my father. Whenever a fleeting sight or sensation reminds me of my parents, a tear trembles in my eye and I make no effort to hold it back. Sometimes I pause and actually whisper, "Sorry Ma, for my impatience. Sorry Di, for whatever neglect." When they were alive, I never expressed my feelings for our family was not demonstrative; but now I do, whenever the "little things" remind me of them. Now, ever so softly and cheerfully, I get to say, "I love you, Ma; I love you, Di." And I assure you, it's never too late.

Asuncion David Maramba is a retired professor, book editor and occasional journalist. Comments to marda@info.com.ph; fax 8210659

THEY SAID

Too much to do

"I have too much to do for our national security and economy which are the important factors serving our people's interest."

—President Macapagal-Arroyo on joining the "mudslinging that others want to start this early"

Grass roots

"All efforts will be in vain if our grass roots are deprived of the basic necessities in life and human security."

—Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on alleviating poverty

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Erratum

Due to a mix-up, an article of freelance writer Sylvia L. Mayuga that had earlier seen print in the INQUIRER was published in the Commentary Section of the Opinion Page last Sept. 24 in lieu of a new article by the same author. Our apologies.—Ed.

How truthful are advertisements?

I WOULD like to call the attention of Cerge Remonde, chair of the Advertising Board of the Philippines, to advertisements that misinform the public about the health benefits of various food products.

Take, for instance, a radio commercial for corned beef. The commercial suggests that a diet of vegetables makes one weak, whereas consuming a lot of corned beef makes one strong. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Walter Willett, M.D., chair of the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health and a professor at the Harvard University School of Medicine, has concluded that "a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can: decrease the chances of having a heart attack or stroke; protect against a variety of cancers; lower blood pressure; help you avoid diverticulitis; guard against cataract and macular degeneration; and, add variety to your diet and enliven your palate." Willett adds that beef is high in saturated fat, which has been linked to cardiovascular diseases.

Equally destructive are commercials touting that hotdogs are good for children, and that infant formula can make babies smarter.

At least three studies published in the Cancer Causes & Control journal have linked nitrite-containing hotdogs with increased risk of childhood brain cancer, brain tumors and leukemia. Even without nitrite, hotdogs contain MSG, which causes headaches, allergic reactions and weight gain. Not to mention the saturated fats, preservatives, dyes, synthetic collagen casings and other chemicals. No amount of added fiber, nutrients, or other substances can magically transform ordinary hotdogs into health food.

As for infant-feeding, a number of studies have shown that formula-fed babies scored lower on mental and developmental tests than breast-fed babies. Children who had been breast-fed had up to 10 IQ points higher than their formula-fed peers. And the longer a baby was breast-fed, the greater was his or her advantage over formula-fed babies.

Breast-fed babies are also healthier than their formula-fed babies. The Lancet medical journal concluded that optimal breast-feeding could save more infant lives than almost any other single measure.

The advertising industry is doing the Filipino people a great disservice by spreading wrong and harmful information. Department of Health statistics show that Filipinos are being killed by diet—and lifestyle-related illnesses, such as heart diseases, vascular diseases, cancers and diabetes. I urge the Advertising Board of the Philippines to pursue "truth in advertising." Advertisement that make health claims should be rigorously reviewed and must be supported by scientific studies. Dr. Michael DeBakey, a cardiovascular expert, once said, "Good information is your best medicine."

—ALEXIS RODRIGO,
22 Quiambao St., Quezon City

Fed up with political news

I AM among the silent majority who are fed up with what's happening in our country. There is too much divisiveness. Too much political hate. Politicians think only of themselves, and to hell with the country.

The atmosphere, bad as it was, has become worse in the light of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's "striptease exposé" which quite obviously is politically motivated. And yet, his colleagues in the Senate are only too happy to oblige him with a grand investigation *kuno*.

Mike Arroyo may or may not be guilty. But that is not the point here. Proper charges should be filed in court and let this matter be processed in an orderly manner according to law. The Senate is being used to advance a senator's presidential aspirations and the senators knowingly allow themselves, and the Senate as a whole, to be used, even if the senator is engaged in high-level "*tsismis*" and character assassination.

The sad thing is that the media lap it up because it's the kind of news that sells. Never mind if the country is mortally wounded. It seems that print and broadcast media's only guideline is what sells and what does not. Sensationalism, negativism and a distorted sense of propriety seem to guide media's behavior.

For instance, the front page of the INQUIRER's Sept. 3 issue was all about the Senate investigation on the Jose Pidal issue, the banner headline and all the other heads on that page without exception. Is there no other news in this country? Does it all have to be about sex, scandal, crime and intrigue?

—FERDINAND G. VILLAFUERTE,
P.O. Box 287, ACPO Cubao,
Quezon City

Sanitary landfills, again

THIS refers to the news item "DENR wants Luzon waste in Tarlac landfill" (PDI, 9/7/03), about Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun's endorsing to the Tarlac Provincial Board the request of Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. to allow neighboring cities and municipalities to dispose of their residual waste in its 100-hectare landfill in Capas.

Gozun said in the report that the landfill is the "first fully engineered sanitary landfill in the Philippines" and an "environmentally sound facility." It would be a "tragedy," she added, if the MCWMC "went bankrupt if it will not get enough waste to be cost-effective."

Numerous, reliable references from the Internet attest there is no such thing as a "sanitary" landfill. The US Environmental Protection Agency says all landfills will leak. "Ultimately," said the EPA, "waste reduction and resource recovery probably provide the best alternative to land disposal."

The Environmental Research Foundation (Annapolis, MD, USA) likens landfills to bathtubs that "leak two ways: out the bottom or over the top."

The engineered elements of a landfill, according to the ERF, are the bottom liner made of clay, plastic or a composite; a leachate collection system; and cover. These elements almost always fail.

If the bottom liner fails, wastes will directly go to the environment. Natural clay is often cracked or degraded by chemicals. Plastic, even high-density polyethylene (HDPE), can be degraded by such household items as mothballs, vinegar, margarine, ethyl alcohol and shoe polish. Composite liners are a combination of plastic (leak-prone) and compacted soil (permeable).

Studies show that "a 10-acre (or some four hectares) of landfill will have a leak rate somewhere between 0.2 and 10 gallons per day." The 100-hectare Capas landfill, which has eaten up otherwise productive land, would surely cause more damage.

Leaks from landfills cause pollution, illness, death and environmental degradation.

The Ecological Solid Waste Management Act provides for waste reduction and resource recovery through the Ecology Center or Materials Recovery Facility for waste, segregated at source. Biodegradable waste is composted, non-biodegradable waste is recycled or sold to the factory. Residual waste is only about 20 percent or less and this can be treated and recycled separately either in the Eco Center itself or in another more specialized facility, such as the one in Biñan, Laguna.

Hence, there is no need for a landfill that would only be an excuse for converting productive land, especially those belonging to farmers, into unproductive environmental risks.

—JOEY C. PAPA and ANA V. PAPA
bangon_kalikasan@skyinet.net

SSS replies to columnist's assertions

ALLOW us to respond to the July 28 and Aug. 18, 2003 columns of Honesto General ("SSS: Road to Perdition" and "Is SSS juggling its books? You bet!") as follows:

Investment expenses are deducted directly from investment income. The Social Security System has consistently shown its income from investments as net of investment expenses (depreciation and maintenance costs of investments in real properties) and as a single line item in the income statement. Investment expenses in 2002 totaled P138.54 million. In determining its allowable expenses, the SSS has consistently applied the statutory limit of 3 percent of other revenues based on net investment earnings. This practice is in accordance with Section 25 of the SSS Charter.

We share General's concern over the ballooning amount being lent to members at concession rates. Millions of SSS members have benefited from the salary and housing loans and suspending these programs at this time would cause serious dislocation to our members. We are exerting all efforts to collect delinquent accounts of both employer and employee members.

In the case of SSS funds used to finance housing loans through the National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. (NHMFC), the financial advisers of the NHMFC have recommended a restructuring program that assures the repayment to the SSS of some P37 billion (principal and interest as of March 31, 2002). The mortgage receivables assigned to the SSS represent a collateral cover of 150 percent of the signed loans. In addition, the national government guarantees to pay 22 percent of the principal obligation of the NHMFC in case the recoveries from the collateral are insufficient to fully pay the SSS. Thus, long-term loans are assured of being collected over the medium to long term.

It is not true that contributions plus investment income for 2002 did not cover benefit payments and operating expenses. Contributions of P34.2 billion plus investment and other income of P11.7 billion or a total of P45.9 billion exceeded benefit payments and operating expenses of P45.5 billion. No dipping into the Reserve Fund was made to make up for the shortfall. The drop in the Reserve Fund was caused by additional provision for losses on non-current marketable securities.

General wrote that the amount disbursed by the SSS for administrative and operating expenses was P4,340.5 million, which he claimed was P802,000 in excess of the budget limit. Contrary to General's assertion, the allowed total operating expenses for 2002 was P4,616.02 million consisting of P4,341.30 million from the Social Security Fund and P274.72 million from the Employees' Compensation Fund (which the SSS administers and therefore, under the EC Charter, is allowed a disbursement limit of 12 percent for both its operating and investment earnings). Clearly, the total operating expenses for 2002 of P4,591.53 million (P4,340.5 million in SSS and P250.99 million in EC) was below the limit of P4,616.02 million.

The increase in personnel costs of P102 million was due mainly to the P2,000 a month increase for rank and file employees given in 2002. This salary increase was in accordance with the Collective Negotiation Agreement (CNA) signed on Dec. 27, 1999.

The SSS continues to refrain, unless extremely necessary, from filling up positions that have been vacated due to retirement or separation of employees in order to save funds. As a result of the continuous adoption of the cost-saving measures and prudent cost management instituted in 2001, the SSS in 2002 saved P504 million in personnel costs and P71 million in other expenses or a total of P575 million.

—CORAZON S. DE LA PAZ,
president and CEO,
Social Security System,
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

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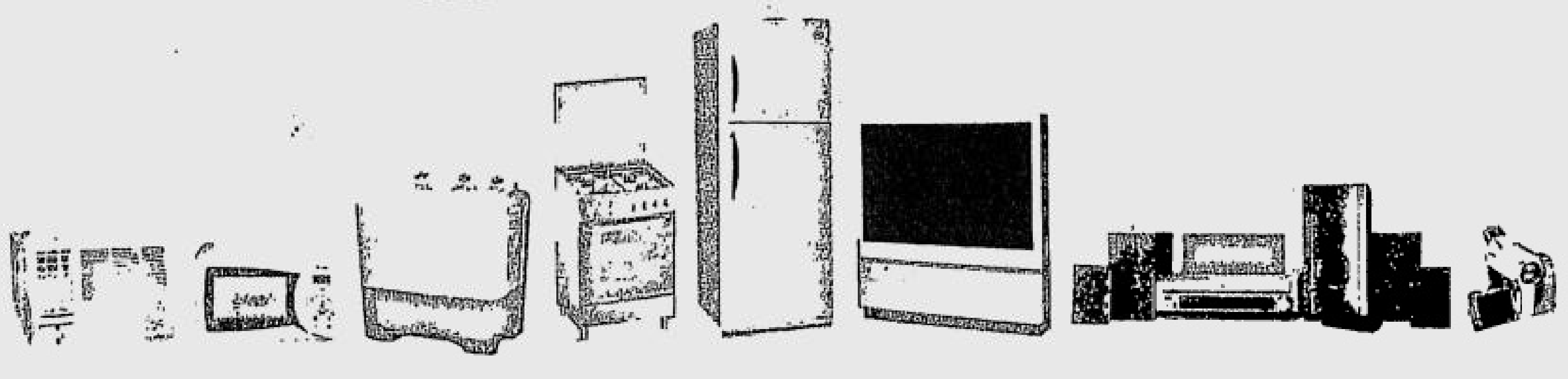

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Army spying sows fear among youths

DAVAO CITY—Leaders of militant youth groups in the city yesterday said they were becoming increasingly alarmed because of the military's continued spying.

Worse, they said they fear ending up dead, such as what happened to their three colleagues in Compostela Valley.

Anakbayan members Lito Doydoy, 27, Marjorie Reynoso, 18, and Jonathan Benaro, a youth councilor of Barangay Mapaang in Maco town, were found dead on Tuesday.

They were abducted with motorcycle driver Ramon Regase while on their way to Maco poblacion on Saturday afternoon.

On Tuesday, the bodies of the victims were dug inside the Selecta Banana Plantation in Barangay Quarry, also in Maco.

Police said the victims were apparently tortured before they were killed.

Human rights group Karapatan had accused the military of summarily executing the victims.

Anakbayan secretary general for Southern Mindanao Jeppie Ramada and vice president Eric Casilao said military intelligence operatives have been tailing them.

The two youth leaders said they were walking home inside Juna Subdivision in Matina District with another Anakbayan staffer around 10:30 on Wednesday when they met a maroon Tamaraw FX, similar to the one used in the abduction of the Maco victims.

Ramada said the vehicle passed by them but later signaled it was moving backwards.

Fear

Fearing for their lives, Ramada said he and his companions ran and returned to their office.

He said from the windows, they observed the vehicle's movement. He said the vehicle later disappeared.

Ramada said they decided to stay inside the office when they later noticed that some vehicles were unusually roving in the area.

Ramada said prior to the incident on Wednesday evening, unidentified men also came to the office of Karapatan along F. Torres Street.

He said the men asked them about persons they do not know.

As this developed, a local newspaper reported that a military officer admitted knowing Willy Javier, the main suspect in the killing of the four youths in Maco.

The military officer, who was not identified in the report, said Javier had previously worked with the Military Intelligence Group (MIG).

Ariel Casilao, Karapatan secretary general, earlier said Javier was positively identified by witnesses as the leader of the armed men who abducted the Maco victims.

But Lt. Col. Agane Adriatico, chief of the military's 5th Civil Relations Group for Southeastern Mindanao, maintained the military's innocence.

"We can't discount the possibility that the incident was done by the NPA (that) used the victims as sacrificial lambs to help the militants in their cause to discredit the military organization," Adriatico said.

Casilao called Adriatico a liar "who would do everything to deodorize the military's image."

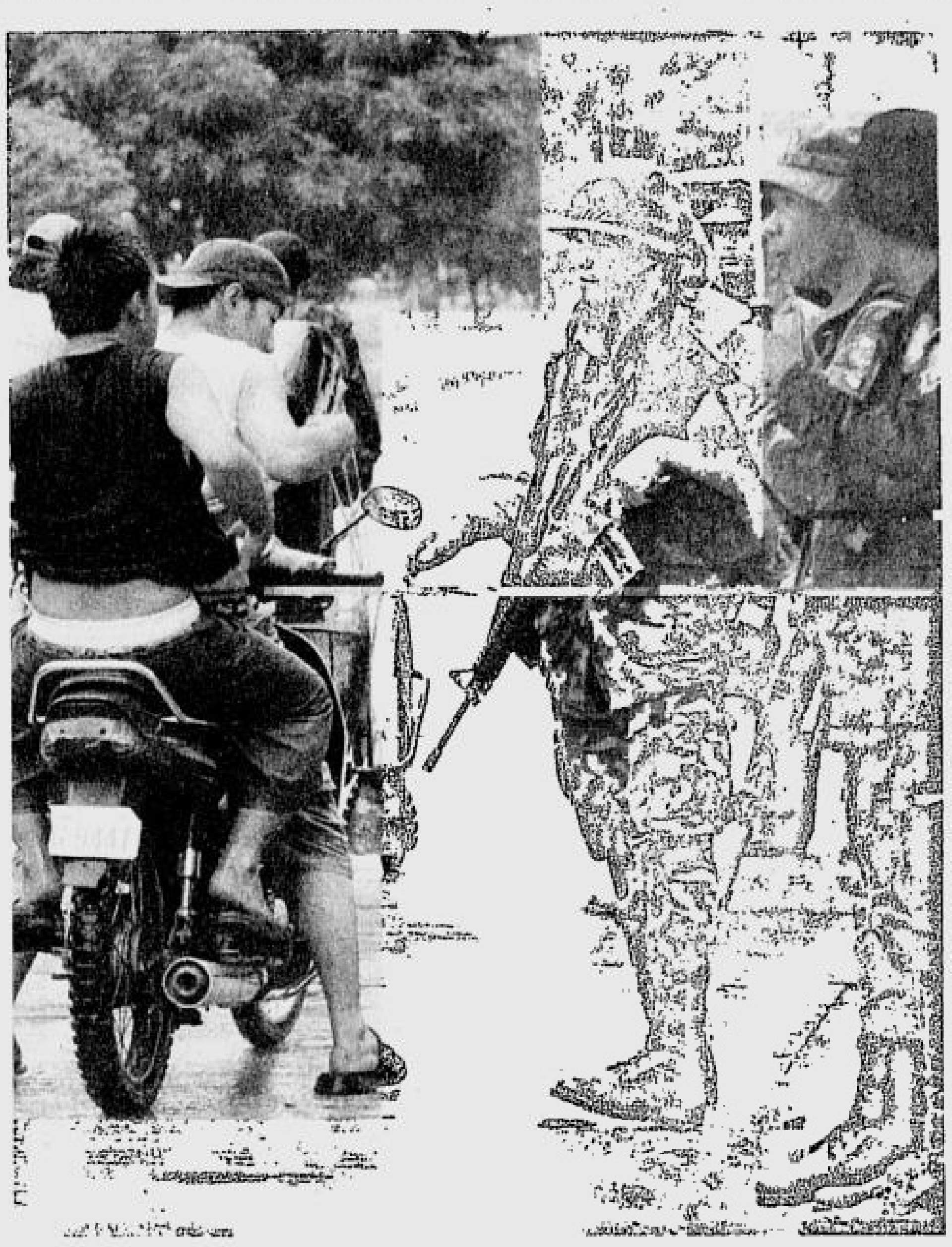
Help

But Adriatico said the military would even help Karapatan to pin down members of the MIG if the militant group could provide evidence to support its claims.

While Adriatico was locked in a contentious issue with Karapatan, *lumad* farmers in Baganga, Davao Oriental complained of harassment allegedly committed by soldiers against them.

The Baganga Farmers Association said soldiers barged inside a Catholic church and abducted and tortured at least six Mandaya farmers on Tuesday.

Anthony Allada with reports from Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau



EDWIN BACASMAS/PDI PHOTO

FINISH LINE

Motorists, including those riding in motorcycles and foot-pedaled contraptions called *trisikad*, slow down at a checkpoint set up in Jolo to guard against the entry of terrorists during the visit there recently of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Briton facing porn raps cries extortion, robbery

ANGELES CITY—A Briton facing charges of violating the anti-pornography law accused four policemen here of robbery, extortion and warrantless arrest when they rescued three Filipino girls in his hotel room in July this year.

Barry Raymond Edwards, 58, said the complaints for rape filed by the three minors were "fabricated to justify the robbery/extortion committed not only by (the three girls) but also by the police of Angeles City."

Assistant City Prosecutor Riben Hilario dismissed the charges last week.

In a counter-affidavit Edwards said policemen took his TV set, wallet, passport, credit cards, P15,000 in cash and other valuable items.

Edwards said his personal belongings were taken through "illegal" and "unlawful" means since the policemen had no search and arrest warrant.

Senior Supt. Jimmy Restua, Angeles City police director, said 20 items confiscated from Edwards' room at the Maharajah Hotel were accounted for. Restua showed a confiscation receipt signed by Edwards and a hotel employee.

According to Restua, police operations to rescue minors did not require search and arrest warrants. Police investigators had also confirmed the activities of Edwards before the July 24 raid, he said.

Senior Insp. Erlinda Tullao, chief of the city police's women and children concern section, said the tapes seized from Edwards "portrayed pornography."

In her July 28 memorandum to Restua, Tullao said the scenes in the tapes were "very offensive to decency and chastity which are contrary to moral and good custom."

"The Briton, who is the author, serves no other purpose rather than send these pornographic materials to his country," she said.

Tullao said Edwards, in video movies, also played the part of actor and his alleged victims, his actresses. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

6 convicted of kidnapping Cebu trader

CEBU CITY—The Regional Trial Court (RTC) has convicted six men for the kidnapping of a businessman nearly five years ago.

RTC Judge Raphael Yrastorza Sr. handed down the death penalty to Ronald Tumalon, Marieto Alvizo and Ronald Caballero who abducted Regan King on Oct. 21, 1998.

Daniel Cuyno was meted with life imprisonment as an accomplice to the crime. Sergio Divinagracia and Elpidio Borela were meted 10-year jail terms as accessories.

The court, however, ruled that "any preventive detention undergone with (the) good behavior of Cuyno, Divinagracia and Borela are credited in the service of their sentence."

Yrastorza also ordered the convicts to return to the King family more than P3 million that King's father paid in ransom.

The six bowed their head when the verdict was being read during the promulgation on Monday. Borela, however, appeared teary-eyed. The six convicts refused to be interviewed.

King did not appear in the promulgation for security reasons.

Defense lawyer Casiano Lumotos said he would file a motion for reconsideration on behalf of his client, Tumalon.

Anacleto Debalucos, lawyer of Borela, said his client can apply for probation since he has been detained for almost five years.

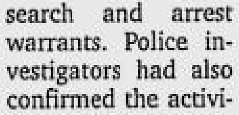
King testified that four armed men who introduced themselves as National Bureau of Investigation operatives went to his office at the reclamation area in Mandaue City, Cebu.

The men who were later identified as Tumalon, Alvizo, Caballero and Alfredo Pelinio, told King's employees that they had a warrant for his arrest.

Pelinio, the head of the kidnap group, was killed during a shootout with authorities on Feb. 3, 2000 in Badian town, Cebu shortly after he escaped from the city jail.

King said the four cuffed him in his thumbs, made him sit in a corner while they ransacked his office looking for cash. *Suzzane Salva and Jolene Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Countdown for Justice



WAPILE

IT is exactly 501 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Radio station gets respite from assault

DAVAO CITY—Mayor Jose Galario Jr. of Valencia City, Bukidnon has lifted late Monday afternoon the temporary closure order he imposed on radio station dxMV Radio Ukay.

In a letter addressed to Radio Ukay station manager Nonette Rosales, Galario said the order's revocation was a result of the City Peace and Order Council meeting Monday.

The mayor said the lifting of the order took effect at 5 p.m. Monday.

Galario cited no reason in his letter why he changed his mind to allow the radio station to operate again.

Both Galario and Ancheta have their own programs at dxMV Radyo Ukay which they have been using in hurling charges at each other. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Opposition twits GMA on sharp drop in ratings

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Carlito Pablo

THE DROP in the public approval rating of President Macapagal-Arroyo was God's answer to her prayer for guidance on whether to run in the May presidential election, according to opposition congressmen.

But Malacañang and administration congressmen said the President's ratings would bounce back.

Assistant Minority Leader Gilbert Remulla said the results of a Pulse Asia survey were "God's message to the President that she should no longer entertain the idea of seeking another term."

Pulse Asia found that Ms Macapagal's approval rating dropped to its all-time low to 41 percent this month from 51 percent last month.

Not just God but also the people had spoken about their disapproval of corruption in the Macapagal administration, according to Minority Leader Carlos Padilla.

"The President should stop blaming (Sen. Panfilo) Lacson and the opposition for this drop because the Jose Pidal issue was about corruption. It symbolized corruption in the government and people believed the exposé," Padilla said.

But Malacañang said the people would restore their faith in the President when Lacson failed to substantiate his money laundering charges against the President's husband.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo said it was "normal" for people to lose some trust in the President immediately after Lacson accused First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo of hiding P260 million in campaign contributions to his wife in several bank accounts including those of Jose Pidal, Arroyo's alleged assumed name.

"But the people are waiting for proof that these charges are true and that there was a violation of any law. And once evidence on this cannot be produced in court, the President will regain the people's trust," Saludo said.

Jose Ma. Rufino, presidential political liaison officer, also expressed optimism that the President's ratings would bounce back.

"The important surveys are those before and during Election Day. That is the moment of truth," Rufino said.

He was confident that the President's ratings would improve in the run-up to the May elections as her socio-economic programs bore fruit.

A maverick congressman of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats said the visit of United States President George W. Bush to Manila on Oct. 18 could help improve Ms Macapagal's ratings.

"The Bush visit can change everything," Rep. Apolinario Lozada Jr. (Negros Occidental) said.

Lozada, however, pointed out that "it is not enough for Bush and the President to just talk about security cooperation because this won't do."

"The US must commit full economic concessions like market access to Philippine products, economic assistance and other types of support that will help improve the people's lives," said Lozada, who belongs to a bloc in Lakas that is supporting the presidential bid of former Sen. Raul Roco. "This will boost the stock of President Macapagal."

But two militant groups said the Bush visit would not boost Ms Macapaga's plunging approval rating.

"It would be better for GMA (the President) to forget the Bush visit and just attend to the concerns of our people raised in the survey such as poverty, low wages, high cost of basic necessities and lack of livelihood opportunities," Sanlakas Rep. JV Bautista said in a statement.

Bautista said there was no sign that the visit would reverse the drop in Ms Macapagal's rating because Bush was suffering from a credibility problem.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas shared Sanlakas' observation.

"Aside from unbridled corruption, the people took notice of Arroyo's anti-people economic policies that further pushed wages to depressed levels, caused prices of basic commodities to soar and deprived people of any opportunity to improve their standards of living," Pamalakas information officer Gerry Albert Corpuz said.

Administration allies in Congress said the drop in the President's approval rating was temporary and insignificant.

Reps. Rodolfo Albano (Isabela), Prospero Pichay (Surigao del Sur), Monico Puentevella (Bacolod City), Robert "Ace" Barbers (Surigao del Norte) and Assistant Majority Leader Peter Allan Cayetano (Taguig) believe that the President would bounce back.

After all the "erroneous reporting" on destabilization, people will see more clearly and appreciate Ms Macapagal's efforts in improving the economy, Albano said.

Pichay said the President's quick response to socio-economic problems facing the country would raise her ratings.

"When the present programs' fruits are seen by Filipinos, President Macapagal's ratings will definitely rise," Cayetano said. "Unfortunately, many of her projects and programs are long term."

Puentevella said the President's speech before the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the state visit of Bush and her expected announcement to join the 2004 presidential election could boost her ratings.

Barbers said the drop was inevitable because of too much politicking among leaders. "Anyway, no one among other presidential aspirants had an increase in rating," he said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Martin P. Marfil*

Poll: Mutineers justified

From page A1

rized, thusly:

- Grievances expressed by the military mutineers were all considered by the public to be with basis and thus justifiable. About 6 to 7 out of 10 survey respondents nationwide shared this opinion.
- Not only did people admit to the mutineers' grievances being with basis, the majority opinion (55%) said that the grievances constituted a sufficient reason for the Oakwood soldiers to rebel against the government.
- Consonant with their idea of military grievances being with basis and justly driving some soldiers to commit rebellious acts against the government, most of the public recommended the liberal treatment of those who participated in the mutiny. A hardline approach (imposing the heaviest penalties allowed by law) appealed to only 21 percent of those polled.
- A sizeable portion of the Armed Forces—at least 25 percent of its members—were suspected by 6 out of 10 survey respondents of having sympathetic attitudes toward the mutineers.
- Much public uncertainty now attends people's reactions to how the authorities and other parties conducted themselves during and after the Oakwood mutiny.
- To make the military more loyal to the government, most of the public (71 percent) recommended addressing their pay and other material needs; a smaller majority (57 percent) counseled giving the soldiers the appropriate equipment for fighting rebels, including those who come from their own ranks.
- Military coups pose a big danger to the government, according to 52 percent of the respondents, with a rather small minority (15 percent) having a different view and seeing rebellious soldiers as being merely a marginal threat to the civilian authorities.
- Nationwide, a big plurality (47 percent) considered future military coups to be a big possibility, with only 20 percent challenging this assessment and saying the possibility was small.
- Should military men attempt another coup, Filipinos reflected much helplessness in their recommended course of action for fellow citizens. Non-involvement was suggested and partisanship discouraged by a plurality (37 percent) of those interviewed, while prayers was the prudent response of an almost identical number of respondents (36 percent).
- In the event of a successful military takeover, the martial authorities would probably not encounter any significant public opposition. Close to 47 percent of all survey respondents predicted that most of the citizenry would adopt a pragmatic wait-and-see attitude regarding the beneficial character of the new regime.

But the Pulse Asia findings showed that despite the many crises beleaguering the country, Filipinos reject authoritarian, non-civilian rule even if it promises stabilization, effective political administration and economic development.

Miranda, in presenting the poll findings titled "Contemporary Public Opinion on Military Coups" at a forum at the Ateneo Professional Schools at Rockwell, Makati, said: "In this latest survey, Filipinos clearly retain this civilian orientation."

Over the last two decades, he said, Filipinos "have not supported military coups and have insisted on a civilian administration in accordance with their Constitution."

Miranda, however, pointed out that despite this "civilian orientation," Filipinos acknowledge that grievances relating to the military institution as well as those afflicting society are grounded in reality.

The Philippine military, Miranda said, is one of the most studied institutions hereabouts. Relative to the 1980s when coup attempts were common, Miranda said: "Filipinos now are more prone to accepting the legitimacy of the expressed grievances by those who join coups."

"Nevertheless," he added, "they insist on constitutionalist approaches to political change and, thus, consider it wrong for even the presumably wronged within the military to take up arms to effect political change."

Miranda described the pattern of responses as "vacillating and indecisive."

He also acknowledged the media's role in shaping people's perceptions of the recent events. "The media is the single most powerful institution, even more powerful than the Church," he said.

For the survey, the country was divided into four regions—Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

Weights were assigned in accordance with National Census population data and current projections. With a 95-percent confidence level, the survey had a margin of error of plus/minus 3 percentage points at the national level and 6 percentage points at the local geographic area level.

The overall findings, Miranda said, showed a very high level of awareness (96 percent) of the failed July military mutiny.

"It appears to have initially rallied the public to close ranks behind the civilian government and generated much political capital for the Macapagal administration," Miranda said. "A month later, much of this support has dissipated and public approval for the President and her administration has considerably decreased." *With a Reuters report*

LDP, NPC leaders start talks to unify opposition

From page A1

we hope to solidify the opposition forces," Angara said at a news conference in the Manila Hotel. "So here we are, racing against time."

Under the Election Code, the process of choosing candidates officially begins on Oct. 15.

Angara told reporters that among the parties the LDP would want to coalesce with were the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, PDP-Laban, Reporma and some members of the Liberal Party and the NPC.

Seek alliance

He reiterated that the LDP and NPC would soon finalize their alliance for the 2004 polls. The parties have for some time conducting exploratory talks.

But at yesterday's meeting, some LDP members sought the need for the NPC to declare whether it would remain as a coalition partner of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

NPC is currently aligned with the administration in the House of Representatives, where it belongs to the Sunshine Coalition led by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, an LDP member who has declared his intention to run for president, underscored the need for the NPC to categorically state whether it was still in alliance with the administration.

"We decided that before we enter into a coalition with any political party we must make sure that party is an opposition party," Lacson told reporters after the meeting, which was attended by 43 of the 49 LDP national executive council members.

He said it would be "rather awkward for LDP to forge a coalition with a party which is in coalition with the administration party."

Dissociate completely

Lacson said the NPC should "disassociate completely" with its coalition with the ruling party. He also said that some LDP members at the meeting expressed their support for his presidential bid.

"Some of our colleagues are of the opinion that we have an announced candidate. We should first push for his being the standard bearer," Lacson said.

Angara said the party did not impose such condition in the resolution approved yesterday.

"What Sen. Lacson said is ideal but we don't want to say that's a precondition," said Angara, who has declared support for the presidential candidacy of Cojuangco.

Besides Lacson, former Education Secretary Raul Roco has declared that he will run.

Another possible candidate is opposition Sen. Gregorio Honasan, a former army colonel who has been implicated by the government as an instigator of the July mutiny.

But all eyes are on Cojuangco, the chair of San Miguel, Southeast Asia's biggest food and beverage group.

Cojuangco, an ally of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and chair emeritus of the NPC which he formed for his unsuccessful presidential bid in 1992, said this month he would announce his intention by the end of September.

Cojuangco's deep pockets could give Lakas a run for its money if he stands as an opposition candidate and can shake off the historical baggage of his ties to the Marcos regime.

"If I were thinking for myself alone, I think the problem is a no-brainer—the answer is no," Cojuangco said on Sept. 3.

"What I do not want my grandchildren to hear is that no matter how successful I get to be as an entrepreneur or as a businessman, I was still a lousy Filipino when I turned my back on my country," he said.

Speculation is rife that President Macapagal-Arroyo will announce she will run after an eight-hour visit by US President George W. Bush to Manila on Oct. 18.

An audience with Pope John Paul II during a trip to Rome this week and a leadership summit by the ruling coalition on Oct. 7 are other factors bolstering talk that she will reverse her pledge not to run. *With a report from Reuters*

US Secret Service points gun at Malacañang official

From page A1

During one tense moment, according to one account, a gun was aimed straight at Fernandez.

No arrests were made, however, and the dish was installed nonetheless. The cocked-gun incident was cleared up after hotel personnel vouched for Fernandez and his crew.

Clincher

The President's two-day schedule begins Thursday morning with meetings with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad.

She will address the 191-nation body at 10:30 a.m. Friday (10:30 p.m. Thursday in Manila).

Ms Macapagal's visit is expected to clinch the Philippines' third successful bid since the 1960s to be a non-permanent member of the powerful UN Security Council, according to Ambassador Lauro Baja.

"I think the trip of the President here will seal the membership, especially when it's the head of state lobbying for the membership," said Baja, the Philippines' permanent representative to the United Nations.

Baja told Filipino reporters that the Philippine government had kept a firm grip on the endorsement it earned last year from other Asian countries despite the security black eye brought about by the escape from police custody of confessed Indonesian bomber Fathur Roman al-Ghozi in July.

The escape of Al-Ghozi had "no effect" on the endorsement because as UN members "don't look into domestic and internal happenings," the diplomat said.

"If your international image is good, if your performance in the UN is good, they elect on those bases," he said, adding:

"We are so confident on getting the seat that we are now on the substantive preparations for our membership."

As good as elected

Another official privy to the lobby that started in the mid-1990s told reporters that while the Philippines still needed the vote of at least two-thirds of the UN membership to get the UN Security Council seat, "we're as good as elected."

The country will now be in a position to assert its views on issues stemming from major world conflicts such as that in Iraq or Liberia, said the official who asked not to be named.

Baja said the election of incoming council members was scheduled on Oct. 10, although it might still be postponed.

He said the Philippines' "elevated stature" before the international community as a result of membership could help attract foreign investors and enable it to push its interests in bilateral or regional negotiations even on matters other than security.

The President is expected to expound on the benefits the Philippines stood to gain from joining the 15-nation council whose five permanent members with veto powers are the United States, United Kingdom, France, China and Russia. The 10 non-permanent members represent five geographical groupings—Asia, Africa, Western and Eastern Europe, and Latin America-Caribbean.

The Philippines was a non-permanent member of the council in the 1960s and in 1980-81, Baja said.

If it gets the seat, it will be a member in 2004-05, replacing Syria as one of the two representatives of the Asian group, the other being Pakistan.

Baja belied reports in Manila that Pakistan was "a rival blocking our campaign."

The President's visit also includes lunch with the US Institute of Peace, a roundtable discussion with members of the US media, and a meeting with executives of software firm Lucent Technologies.

On her schedule as well is a breakfast meeting with the Asia Society Council on Foreign Relations. Before leaving for Rome, she will have a luncheon meeting with foreign ministers and ambassadors to the Organization of Islamic Conference, and a meeting with the Filipino community in Jersey City.

Spike attack on Edsa disables 39 cars

From page A1

along a 3-km stretch of Edsa's southbound lane, the Metro Manila Development Authority said.

Officials said two men on a motorcycle were seen scattering the spikes but their identities and motive were unknown.

The incident came as the military was placed on high alert for any attempts to destabilize the country while President Macapagal-Arroyo is on a five-day trip to the United States and Europe.

The spikes were clearly not placed there as a mere prank, said Angelito Vergel de Dios, the director of the MMDA Traffic Operations Center.

"The spikes clearly had a purpose. *Pinaghirapan at pinagkagastusan* [The people behind this spent money and worked hard at making these spikes]," he said.

Vergel de Dios said the spikes, which resembled large jack stones, busted the tires of 39 vehicles passing through Edsa's southbound lane at about 8:30 a.m.

He said traffic halted at the Guadalupe portion of the thoroughfare as the car owners began to notice that their tires were busted.

He said the car tires had been "busted beyond repair."

Police and firetrucks rushed to the scene and cleared the road of spikes and vehicles with flat tires. Traffic police were also dispatched to search other parts of the avenue for spikes.

No one was injured.

Vergel de Dios noted that the people behind the spike attack must have used welding machines and grinders to manufacture the spikes which measured about 2 inches in diameter.

"One side [of the spikes] had a length of at least one inch," the MMDA official said.

He said the MMDA has turned the spikes over to the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) for further investigation.

NCRPO chief Gen. Reynaldo Velasco said his office was still verifying where the spikes came from. *Margaux Ortiz, with a report from AFP*

Cory on Joey: If Ninoy were alive, he'd be dead …

From page A1

"let Kris grow after this." She said she wanted her daughter's life "to go back to normal as soon as possible."

Heartbreaking

Talk show host Boy Abunda, who is also one of Kris' closest friends and advisers, said the sight of the former President hugging her youngest and favorite child right after the interview was "heartbreaking."

Boy said Cory kept on repeating to Kris, "See, all you had to do was tell the truth."

Kris also quoted her mother as reassuring her after the interview, "I will always take care of you and Josh," Kris' 7-year-old son by actor Phillip Salvador.

Make mom happy

After the interview, Kris and her brother, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, had a long talk in the Times Street home, where she and Josh have been staying after the sordid fight of Kris and Joey on Monday night at an Essensa condo unit in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

The INQUIRER sources said that Noynoy requested Kris, together with her son Josh, "to make our mother happy."

One source said Noynoy quoted Cory as saying more than once, "I'm 70, and I'm ready to die."

According to the source, Noynoy told Kris, "I've accepted that you're mom's favorite, that you're the one who makes her happy. *Paligayahin mo ang mom.*"(Make mom happy.)

Lakas letter

On Monday night just a few hours before the quarrel erupted between the lovers, the INQUIRER learned that Marquez had received a letter from the Lakas party. The letter, said to have been written by Lakas national executive director Joey Rufino, informed Marquez that the party was favoring Parañaque Vice Mayor Jun Bernabe as its candidate for Parañaque mayor in 2004, and that Rep. Ed Zialcita as its congressional standard-bearer. *(See story at right on this page.)* The letter also informed Marquez that it was his option to be Bernabe's vice mayor.

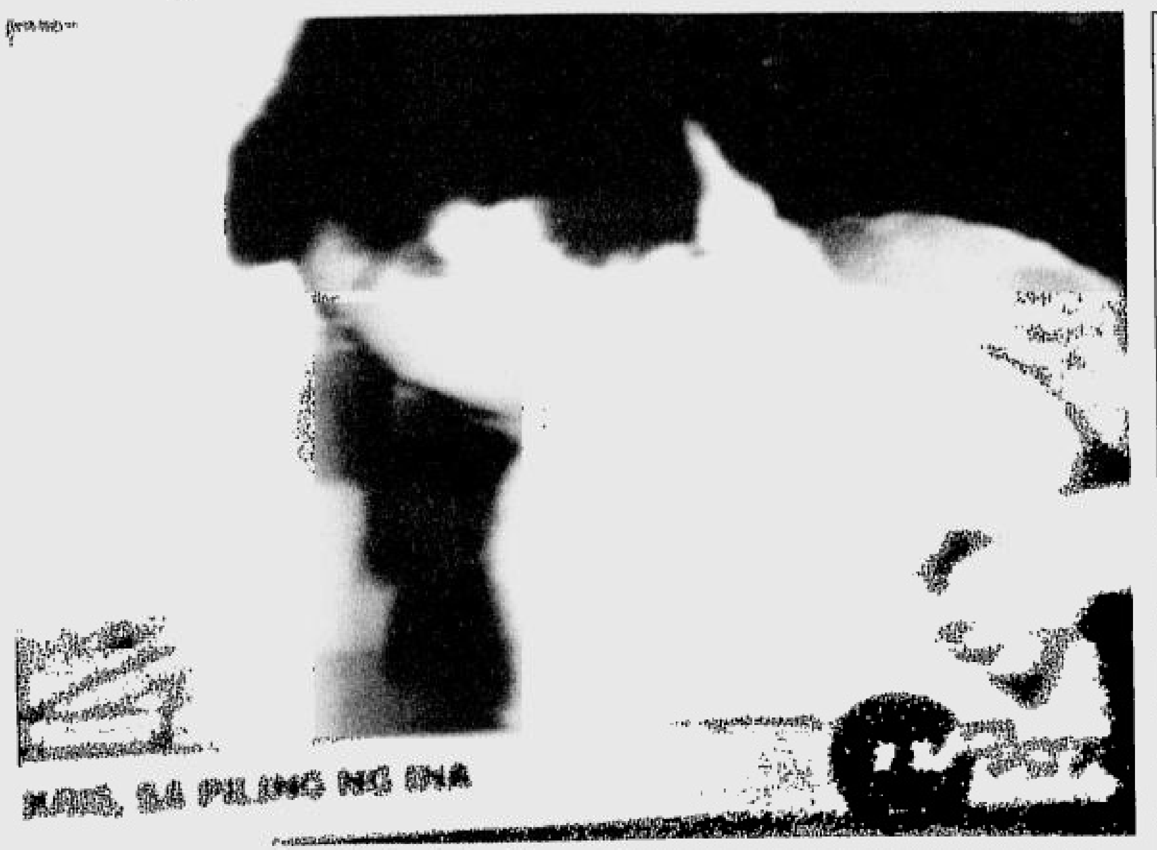
Marquez, who is concluding his three terms as mayor, had been bent on running for a Congress seat in 2004.

Why he snapped

"That must be the reason why he snapped Monday night," one source in Kris' circle said last night.

That Monday night someone close to Marquez noticed that he was "quiet, and sad."

"His ego must have been shattered" after receiving the Lakas letter, the source added.


KRIS, SA PILING NG INA

BY KRIS' own account, the realization that only her mom had given her "unconditional love" was what broke down her steely defense on Wednesday night, and made the tears start flowing. ABS-CBN TV GRAB

The INQUIRER yesterday also learned that the STD Kris had allegedly contracted from Marquez was chlamydia, "its mildest form." Chlamydia is described as a gonorrhea-like disease caused by a bacterium.

The INQUIRER also learned that when she had to go to St. Luke's Medical Center on a Saturday for a checkup, Marquez did not go with her, although she had told him about it. Kris had to undergo tests, injections and a vaginal ultrasound, the source said. The treatment took three weeks.

Marquez himself decided to be treated and to take antibiotics only after Kris' doctor urged her that her partner should be informed of her condition.

Lakas shuts door on Joey

By Gil Cabacungan

COMES now the political fallout for Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez.

After his public breakup with Kris Aquino, the ruling Lakas party to which Marquez belongs, has decided to endorse the incumbent, Rep. Eduardo Zialcita, as standard bearer for Parañaque's lone congressional district next year.

Final term

Lakas executive director Joey Rufino said that the scandal had virtually shut the door on Marquez. He's on his third and final term as mayor while Zialcita would be seeking a second term.

"He made a request in the past to be our standard bearer but we already told him that would be tough because the party respects the equity of the incumbent. This latest incident has just made this a certainty," Rufino said.

Friends of Cory

Rufino noted that the closeness of the Lakas' top brass—President Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Fidel V. Ramos, and House Speaker Jose de Venecia—with Kris' mother, former President Corazon Aquino, has likewise made it virtually impossible for the party to endorse Marquez as a standard-bearer.

Even Marquez's status in the party is now in doubt. Rufino said the party would hold its own probe of the incident to determine whether the actor-politician was fit to remain as a Lakas member.

ABS-CBN whips GMA 7 with Kris' interview

From page A1

nered 47.2 percent and GMA 7's "Frontpage" only 18.3 percent, according to a copy of the unofficial ratings from AGB Philippines People Meter Survey for Mega-Manila on Sept. 24, which the INQUIRER obtained yesterday. Mega Manila includes the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Bulacan.

The ratings become official only when AGB releases them a week after the monitored telecast.

During the portion featuring news anchor Korina Sanchez's live interview with Aquino at the family home in Quezon City, the ratings shot to 53 percent, said an industry source who asked not to be named.

The interview, wherein Aquino disclosed details of her relationship and violent breakup with comedian Joey Marquez, also mayor of Parañaque, was aired uninterrupted for 35 minutes.

Marquez himself was interviewed on "Frontpage."

For the late-night newscasts, ABS-CBN's "Insider" anchored by Cito Beltran and Karen Davila also edged out GMA 7's "Saksi" anchored by Mike Enriquez and Vicky Morales in the ratings game. "Insider" posted 16.7 percent, and "Saksi," 12.2 percent.

But the rating for Wednesday's "TV Patrol" was not its highest ever.

The program registered 47.8 percent on Nov. 8, 2001, for its coverage of the aftermath of actress Nida Blanca's murder at the Atlanta Tower in San Juan. For its coverage of the arrest of Philip Medel, then principal suspect in the Blanca murder, on Nov. 19, 2001, it posted 48.5 percent.

Angry townsfolk

In Calasiao, Pangasinan, townsfolk swamped the Dagupan Electric Power Corp. (Decorp) with angry phone calls when an eight-hour blackout cut the airing of Aquino's interview.

Decorp, which provides electricity to Dagupan City and the towns of Sta. Barbara and Calasiao, had "to patiently explain that the blackout was the fault of the National Transmission Corp.," Decorp engineer Edwin Gutierrez told the INQUIRER.

Gerry Torres, Transco's Labrador substation manager, said a jumper loop or conductor in a transmission post that supplied power to Decorp snapped because of power overload.

"Early evening is really a peak load when every household uses electric power. The jumper loop may have already been weak and was not able to endure the thermal overheat," Torres said.

He could not say whether the overload was caused by the big number of TV viewers at that time.

In Sta. Barbara, radio commentator Joel Balolong said he and his neighbors were "incensed" over the outage.

He said they tried to find a generator set so they could continue watching "TV Patrol" and "Saksi." Finding none, the townsfolk went out on the streets, made a bonfire and stayed up until midnight animatedly discussing who between Aquino and Marquez was telling the truth.

Those who failed to watch the TV interviews contented themselves with reading yesterday's papers. What Aquino said during the interview was the hottest topic among students, teachers and office workers. *With a report from Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Kris hailed for breaking 'culture of silence' on domestic violence

From page A1

Children's Concerns Division of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Camp Crame, there are 13.2 women battered every day for the first six months of this year.

This means that, on the average, one woman is battered every two hours in the country.

According to division chief Sr. Supt. Yolanda Tanigue, they recorded a total of 2,381 cases of battering of women from January to June of this year.

This means a total of 397 women are battered and abused each month.

Tanigue said the case of Kris Aquino would be included in their third quarter numbers.

Serious social issue

Tanigue also said that she expects cases of battered women reported to police would increase. This, she explained, is because other battered women would take the example of Aquino and finally have the courage to report their cases to police.

The NCRFW asserts that Violence Against Women (VAW) is a gender-based issue that violates the very core of a person's human rights. "VAW is not just a trivial concern that should be treated as a private matter. It is a serious social issue and an urgent human rights concern for countless Filipino women living in constant fear and insecurity over their lives and safety," added De Dios.

According to De Dios, domestic violence is the most pervasive form of violence against women, characterized by physical as well as psychological or emotional abuse by the husband or live-in partner.

The Center for Women's Resources said that residents in a Tondo community estimates at least 70 percent of women are battered, said Palabay.

This violence, Palabay explained, occurs mainly because of the prevalent view that women are properties or are mere objects solely for the pleasure and service of their male partners.

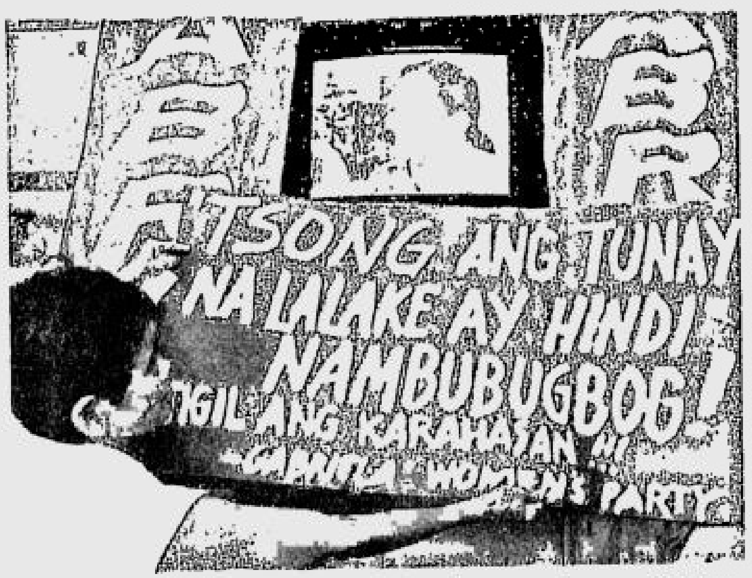
The NCRFW, the policy making body and adviser to the President and the Cabinet on women's concerns, called for the immediate passage of pending bills on domestic violence and abuse of women in intimate relationship in the Senate.

Gabriela Secretary General and Bayan Muna Party-list Representative Liza Largoza Masa also called on the Senate to immediately pass its version of the Anti-Abuse of Women in Intimate Relationships (Anti-Awir) to help address the prevalence of violence against women.

Inspiration for women

The Anti-Awir Bill was passed in the Lower House early this year.

The lady solon also called on women to take action against violence and abuse. "There is also a need for massive information and education campaign to help educate women and men about the rights of women. Women need to muster to stand up as individuals and as an organized group to fight against women.



BACK TO YOU. Joey Marquez gets it from the women's group Gabriela, rallying behind Kris for breaking "the culture of silence" that has killed many others and continues to paralyze thousands more. JOAN BONDOC

De Dios seconded Maza: "There is an urgent need to immediately enact this very important piece of legislation. Too many women have already suffered and continue to suffer in silence. We cannot afford to endanger more lives and prejudice the future generation."

Dr. Zenaida Rotea, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' episcopal commission on women, said Kris' confession would inspire other wives who are victims of domestic violence to come out.

Speaking in her personal capacity, Rotea said battered wives should be brave like Aquino in coming out in the open and seeking justice.

"She will be an inspiration because she did this even if she knows that it would have a negative effect on her reputation," Rotea told reporters in an interview.

Regarding the showing of Kris and Marquez's confession on live prime time TV—complete with sordid details on STDs, extramarital affairs and domestic violence—Rotea said parents should explain and put in the proper context what the estranged couple talked about on air.

"It is news and it is supposed to be the truth, so we can't stop children from watching them. But if the children ask, parents must explain to them what is right and what is wrong," she explained.

Bar examinees: Why penalize us for wrongful act of a few?

From page A1

grade of 85 percent for that subject.

And quite predictably, a congressman yesterday called for a House investigation into the leak. Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico said there was an "urgent need" for the House committee on justice to probe "in aid of legislation" the said leakage.

Suplico said the investigation would determine whether there was a need to amend laws or to enact new laws to prevent the recurrence of such irregularities in future bar examinations.

The SC meanwhile has yet to formally begin its investigation. It also still has no suspect on who leaked the test questions.

SC Clerk of Court Luzviminda Puno said the high tribunal would decide on Tuesday what to do with the leakage.

Puno said the leaked questions were made in the private office of the examiner for Mercantile Law, but added that only Justice Jose Vitug knew the identity of the examiner.

'Compassionate justice'

The Northern Luzon bar examinees led by Leandro B. Yañgot Jr. of St. Louis University said that while they agreed with the wisdom behind the SC's decision to preserve the integrity of the bar examination, they wanted "compassionate justice be applied to all bar examinees."

"We were not privy to the leakage and should not be penalized for the wrongful act of others. We are asking for their understanding that they should apply compassionate justice," Yañgot told reporters.

Should the SC disagree with their proposal, Yañgot said the court should come up with an alternative solution other than the reexamination scheduled at 8 p.m. on Oct. 4 at the De La Salle University in Manila.

Yañgot said the examinees, majority of whom come from the provinces, were hard-pressed on surviving financially in Metro Manila because an extended stay in the capital was not included in their budget.

"(Examinees) are now in a quagmire on how they will make both ends meet until Oct. 4 unless the honorable Court will provide for their expenses and daily needs," the petition said.

"Most of us will not be able to survive for an extended week. Where are we going to get (the money to) pay (for our) rent and daily needs?" Yañgot asked.

Extending agony

A total of 5,455 law graduates have been taking the 2003 bar examinations, which started last Sept. 7. The tests were held every Sunday thereafter and were supposed to end this Sunday.

"(We) are in fact not only financially drained but (are) also mentally exhausted so that to extend (our) agony will further cause mental stress and emotional anguish, notwithstanding the risk that (we) will be exposed to as the reexamination is scheduled during the dangerous time of night," the petition said.

Yañgot pointed out that many of the examinees were not familiar with Manila, and the 8 p.m. exam schedule would be "scary (given) the level of criminality in the metropolis."

"Many, I'm sure, have no more brain cells reserved for an extended exam," he added.

When a leak occurred in the 1979 bar examinations on Labor and Social Legislation and Taxation, the SC had also ordered the reexaminations on the two subjects.

'Patok-patok'

Yañgot said he himself got a copy of the leaked questions on Mercantile Law after the test last Sunday.

"I have a copy of it. I was so dismayed and demoralized after I got a copy after the exams," Yañgot said.

The questions in the exam and in the leak, he said, "were exactly the same."

He said he had just come out of the exam room when he saw a group of male and female examinees talking animatedly.

"They were saying *patok-patok*, so I asked for a copy," Yañgot said.

He did not specify what school the students came from, but said they were from Metro Manila.

Split the grade

Former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, who is also a law professor and former law dean at the San Sebastian College, proposed that instead of a reexamination, the results of the Mercantile Law exam be scrapped and its 15-percent weight be equally divided among the seven other subjects in the bar examinations.

Rodriguez said the 15 percent could be distributed equally among the seven other subjects, namely Political and International Law (which at present has a 15-percent weight), Labor and Social Legislation (10 percent), Civil Law (15 percent), Taxation (10 percent), Criminal Law (10 percent), Remedial Law (20 percent) and Legal Ethics and Practical Exercises (5 percent).

Mathematically, however, 15 cannot be divided "equally" into seven.

Meanwhile, an official of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila denied rumors that one of their law graduates suffered a heart attack due to the SC order for a reexamination.

Tita Resuma of the PLM College of Law said a 29-year-old female law graduate did die but she died in her sleep on Tuesday. *With reports from Carlito Pablo, Gerald Lacuarta*

Scrapping of power universal fee sought

CONSUMER groups have asked the Supreme Court to nullify a provision of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) that sets the collection of a "universal charge" from electric power consumers.

Iloilo-based groups Katulong ng Bayan and Environmentalist Consumer's Network, Inc. and one Romeo P. Gerochi asked the high court in a petition on Wednesday to strike down Epira's section 34.

The section states that within a year from the effectivity of the law (in June 2001), a universal charge "determined, fixed and approved" by the Energy Regulatory Commission "shall be imposed on all electricity end-users, including self-generation entities."

ERC earlier set the rate at P0.0168 per kilowatt for missionary electrification, and P0.0025 per kWh as environmental charge.

The petitioners said the SC should order a stop to the collection and that consumers who had been thus billed should be refunded.

They claimed that the "imposition" amounted to "taxation without proper representation" and was "oppressive and confiscatory."

The power to tax is a legislative function that could not be delegated to any executive or administrative agency like the ERC, they pointed out.

Respondents in the petition were the Department of Energy, the National Power Corporation, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Group, Strategic Power Utilities Group, and the Panay Electric Company, Inc. *Philip C.Tubeza*

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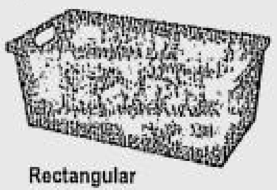

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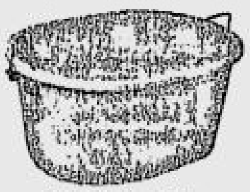

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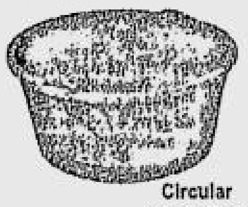

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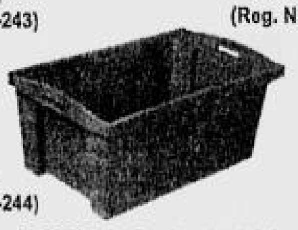

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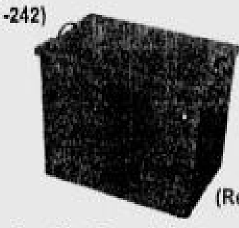

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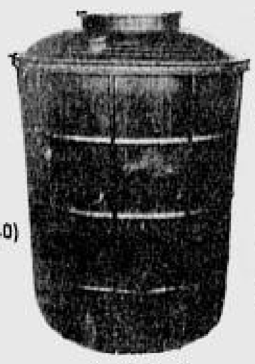

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On September 5, 2003, the Regional Trial Court of Angeles City, Branch 59, issued **Search Warrant No. 03-21 against SILVER SPIRIT PLASTIC, INC. and/or PONY PLASTIC CORP. and/or SOON BAEK SEO and/or REGINA CORTEZ** and/or the manager and occupants/employees of Esquerra Street, Longos, Pulilan, Bulacan **commanding the IPR - Division of the National Bureau of Investigation "to make an immediate search at any time of the DAY on the premises above described and forthwith seized and take position of the following:** a. Complete or partially complete Circular Fishing Boxes covered by copyright registration No. H2001-240; b. Complete or partially complete Fishing Box covered by copyright registration No. H2001-241; c. Complete or partially complete Oval Fishing Boxes covered by copyright registration No. H2001-242; d. Complete or partially complete Utility Models for Plastic Purifying Septic Vaults covered by copyright registration No. H98-416; e. Labels, prints, packages and other paraphernalia bearing the copyrights owned by Mr. Soon Weon Seo; f. 2 sets of Hydraulic oil pumps and 2 sets of electric motors, rollers and motors (1 set), moulds (5 pcs. Septic tanks; 2 sets 50 L baniera, 1 set 70 L, 2 sets 50 L square, 1 set 140 L banieras), 14 sets pistons and plates, electric main control with panel board, three (3) phase electric main switch and other instruments used for the manufacture of the subject fishing boxes; g. and Sales invoice, delivery receipts, ledgers, journals, purchase orders and all other books of account and documents used in the recording of the production, distribution and sales, and other transactions in connection with the subject fishing boxes, **which are used for their illegal activities and to bring the same to this Court to be dealt with as the law directs."** On the same date, the IPR - Division of the National Bureau of Investigation proceeded to the subject establishments and served the SEARCH WARRANT. The NBI seized and confiscated items infringing upon the above-mentioned copyrighted products of **SOON WEON SEO.**

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METRO

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

NBI sniffing out Metro shabu lab

Seized raw materials provide lead

By Leila B. Salaverria

SEIZED imported chemicals and other raw materials which could be used in making shabu were intended for someone and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) intends to find out who.

"These chemicals were brought here for a reason. And we believe they are meant to be used in the manufacture of shabu," NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said.

According to him, there was a possibility that a shabu factory was operating within Metro Manila or in a nearby province and they intend to find it.

Wycoco said the NBI was coordinating with other drug enforcement agencies in monitoring possible shabu factories in the metropolis.

The NBI's theory was spawned by the discovery and seizure last week in Tondo and Paco, both in Manila, of raw materials which could have been used to make at least 1,000 kilos of shabu.

In the Tondo raid done by the NBI and agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, authorities seized 1,560 cans of thionyl hydrochloride.

Thionyl hydrochloride when mixed with the drug ephedrine produces shabu or methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu).

In another warehouse in Paco, authorities seized 8,000 kilos of various chemicals and equipment which could be used to make the illegal drug.

Among the confiscated contraband were packages of acetone, sodium acetate, anhydrous sodium hydroxide, activated carbon powder, hydrochloric acid, porcelain funnels, flask tabulations, filter paper and oil pumps.

However, the suspected shabu-making materials could have been intended for one of the shabu laboratories earlier raided by the police.

The INQUIRER has gathered that the seized shabu component chemicals had been sitting in the Paco warehouse since April and May and ACnever claimed by their consignees.

In May, the police busted a shabu laboratory in Multinational Village in Parañaque City. This was followed by the discovery of a shabu factory in Silang, Cavite.

A few days later, another drug laboratory was raided in Merville, Parañaque City.

Diaz slay suspect had next target

By Leila B. Salaverria

DAGTING

THE ARREST of the alleged gunman in the slay of airport executive Lilia Diaz could have saved the life of another person.

According to Supt. Edgar Danao, chief of the District Intelligence and Investigation Division (DIID) of the Western Police District, suspect Zaldi Dagting had been tapped to kill another target for P2.5 million.

Danao said they got the information from text messages found in Dagting's cellphone.

Members of the WPD and the National Bureau of Investigation arrested Dagting on Tuesday outside an electrical factory in Taguig.

He has been tagged as the gunman who shot Diaz in Parañaque last Sept. 9.

The victim was the assistant general manager for finance and administration of the Manila International Airport Authority.

After Dagting's arrest, police inspected his cellular phone and found several revealing messages.

"*Wag ka muna pumasok ng trabaho bukas. Pinapapunta ka niya sa San Juan, may bagong* target, P2.5M," Danao quoted one of the text messages as saying.

Another text message told him to be careful and to pick up his remaining balance, apparently referring to remaining payment for the killing of Diaz, the DIID chief said.

Dagting's alleged texter even asked about the welfare of Diaz's family, Danao added.

"*Mag-iingat ka ha. Kunin mo na balanse mo bukas. Kamusta na pamilya ni* Diaz? *May* next target *ka*, TY," the second text message allegedly read said Danao.

The suspect has refused to comment on the allegations that he was hired to kill Diaz. He also kept silent about the text messages in his phone.

Instead, Dagting accused the police of sending the text messages.

The DIID chief said that was impossible because they had not known the suspect's cellphone number beforehand.

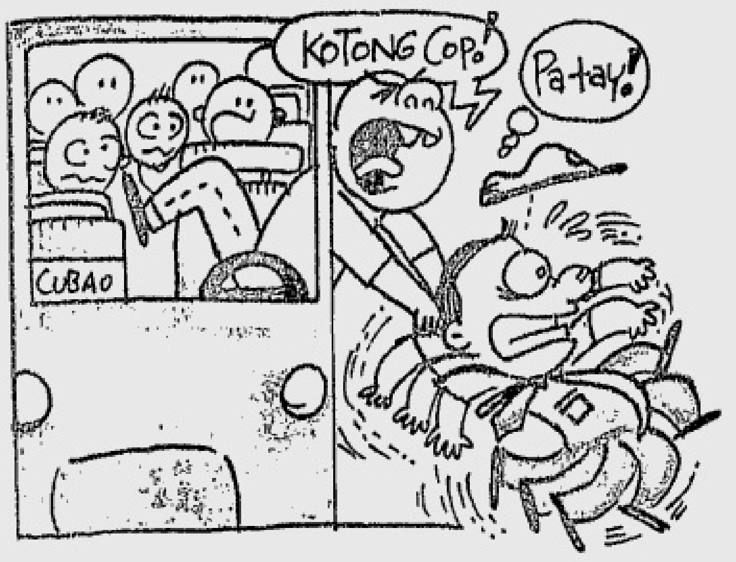
Danao also said the two text messages were sent by one number only and the number was not registered under any name in the phonebook.

The WPD has asked the NBI for help in tracing the number and checking out the phone calls made to and from Dagting's number.

Meanwhile, Atty. Edmund Arugay, NBI chief for the National Capital Region, said they already knew the motive for Diaz's ambush and were looking for the mastermind.

The authorities are also hunting down Dagting's alleged accomplice who drove the motorcycle used in the slay of Diaz

Danao said there were no indications that Dagting was a member of the Kuratong Baleleng gang. He, however, added that the suspect was a member of the Batang City Jail gang.


KOTONG COP!
Pa-tay!
CUBAO

NCRPO turns bus drivers into 'kotong' cop hunters

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

KOTONG cops beware.

The National Capital Region Police Office is going to turn bus drivers and conductors into hunters of extorting traffic enforcers.

The NCRPO, through a memorandum of agreement with the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (IMBOA), has made it easier for bus drivers and operators to blow the whistle on the extortion activities of policemen and enforcers.

NCRPO director Reynaldo Velasco yesterday signed the MOA with IMBOA president Claire dela Fuente, which also formalized the deployment of plainclothes policemen on buses.

The MOA supplies the guidelines for the deployment which began almost two weeks ago.

With the MOA, police are hoping to reduce street crimes, particularly highway robberies.

Bus detectives are uniformed or plainclothes policemen randomly deployed in buses in teams of two.

And since the NCRPO said it could not deploy two-man teams on all the more than 4,000 buses operating in the metropolis daily, the police have agreed to put up "staging points" on key roads in the metropolis to monitor the operations of the buses.

Aside from securing bus passengers, bus detectives are also tasked to monitor the activities of traffic enforcers and policemen who could be involved in extortion activities.

Yesterday, the NCRPO announced the arrest of SP03 Benito Aldeza of the Marikina City Police for allegedly extorting money from a jeepney driver.

Aldeza was caught at about 2:30 a.m. yesterday on C5 Road corner C.P. Garcia Street in Pasig City, following a text complaint sent to the Text 117 Hotline.

In Northern Metro Manila, five-man police teams, instead of two-man units, would be deployed in buses.

Virgilio Espija of the Northern Police District earlier said two policemen would be no match to robbers operating in groups.

The IMBOA earlier cited one case where a bus was robbed by at least 15 robbers.

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Erap aide pleads not guilty

By Margaux Ortiz

RAMON "Eki" Cardenas, top aide of deposed President Joseph Estrada, yesterday pleaded not guilty to charges of coup d'état before the Makati Regional Trial Court.

Cardenas, former chief of the Presidential Management Staff, was arrested for alleged involvement in the July 27 failed mutiny.

Judge Oscar Pimentel of the Makati-RTC Branch 148 set Cardenas' first day of trial on Sept. 29.

Cardenas filed a motion for bail even though the charges against him were non-bailable, court officials said.

He argued that he had just been operated on and needed rest.

Cardenas was arrested immediately after the Makati mutiny was quelled by the government.

He had been in detention since then.

The former Estrada top aide was originally charged with rebellion but this had been amended to coup d'état.

If found guilty, Cardenas faces a penalty of life imprisonment.

Meanwhile, the National Bureau of Investigation turned over to the court three boxes of evidences linking Cardenas to the failed mutiny.

Lawyer Gregorio Zuñiga of the NBI-National Capital Region said the two big boxes contained Magdalo flags and armbands.

The boxes also contained personal effects of the soldiers like a life vest, a travel bag and bullet containers.

Another small box contained empty grenade shells, Zuñiga said.

HOT CARGO
Chief Supt. Romulo Maningding checks ammonium nitrate fertilizers which can be used in making bombs. The shipment was seized at Manila's North Harbor. ERIK ARAZAS

Lax bank security blamed for heists

Edson Tandoc Jr.

SOME of the banks held up over the past few weeks are partly to blame because of the lax security that they enforce, a ranking police official in Metro Manila said yesterday.

Valenzuela City police chief Jose Marcelo chided the banks as he urged them to set up tighter security in and around their establishments.

In an interview, Marcelo cited the robbery at the Planters Bank in Marulas which became an easy target because of the "laxity" of its security guards.

He pointed out that the suspects managed to slip their guns into the bank because the guards failed to detect them.

Marcelo said each bank should have at least four to five security guards. Some banks in the metropolis only have two to three guards.

He also said banks should prohibit cell phones inside their premises as these could be used in planning and synchronizing robbery attempts.

For his part, Northern Police District director Marcelino Franco said banks should only employ guards from "credible" agencies.

Unauthorized persons should also be barred access to cashiers, he added.

The two officials saw the need for alarm systems and closed circuit television cameras for added security.

For their part, Franco said the would heighten police visibility around critical business areas and improve their intelligence work to identify bank robbery suspects and prevent future heists.

Woman cop takes on 3 FX robbers

Luige del Puerto

THREE men, said to be behind the rash of robberies in Marikina City, have found their match in a woman police officer who shot it out with them—hitting one of them in the groin.

For her bravery, presence of mind and determination, Marikina police chief Senior Supt. Felipe Rojas, Jr. is recommending a spot promotion for SP02 Erma Jabal, 40, a member of the Presidential Anti Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) task force.

Jabal was on her way home on board an FX taxi at 10:30 p.m. Wednesday when the robbers, armed with knives and a .38-caliber revolver, announced the heist along J.P. Rizal Street, Barangay Concepcion Uno.

The suspects ordered the driver, Eric Gatela, 33, of San Mateo, Rizal, to slow down, turn right to Greenheights Subdivision, and pull over. They then took the passengers' mobile phones and other valuables.

Jabal did not wink when the suspects asked for her phone. She pulled her gun out and shot the suspects, hitting one in the testicles, and another in the hand, according to Insp. Antonio Cruz, head of the city's criminal investigation group.

Within seconds, it was all over. The woman single-handedly foiled the robbery.

In their signed statements, the other passengers—Leoniza Andres, 46, Henasty Alibong, 27, and Emmy Lumabe, 24—said that after the gunfight, they saw Jabal on top of one of the robbers, pinning him to the ground.

Insp. Cruz said the suspects' bullet wounds show that Jabal did not mean to kill them.

"They were still lucky," Cruz said.

Shortly after the scuffle, Jabal told Supt. Rojas that she only intended to maim the suspects.

The passengers were lucky too, Rojas added.

Only the driver was hurt in the crossfire. He was hit in the back, but the injury was slight and he would soon recover, Rojas said.

Another police officer said Jabal was very sharp. He explained that the woman officer knew instantly who the suspects were, and chose carefully where to shoot to ensure the safety of the other passengers.

The suspect who was hit in the crotch was identified as Randy Salonga, 23, of Barangay Parang.

The two other suspects managed to escape.

But minutes later, sketchy reports reaching the Eastern Police District headquarters said one of the suspects had sought treatment at the Labor Hospital in Quezon City.

Officer on case P02 Edwin Arce immediately went to the hospital to check, and found suspect, Elmer Basco, also of Barangay Parang.

Arce said Basco, who was shot in the right hand, told doctors that he was a victim of a hacking incident. Basco also gave attending physicians a false name, police said.

Car thieves, robbers taken off the streets

SMALL-TIME criminal groups eventually evolve into big-time syndicates.

According to National Capital Region Police Office chief Deputy Director Gen. Reynaldo Velasco, this is the reason why crime groups "have to be nipped in the bud."

Velasco yesterday announced that with the recent arrest of members of two criminal syndicates in Metro Manila, police are successfully preventing small-time criminals from "evolving."

Velasco said that the Las Piñas police were able to collar four suspected car thieves at the corner of Beneth Street and Carnibal Park on Tuesday.

Las Piñas police chief Senior Supt. Armando Pineda identified the suspects as Nestor Maglalang, 43, Arturo Romeon, 36, Eduardo Barroga, 42, and Noel San Andres, 32.

Pineda said when the lawmen frisked the suspects, they found picklocks and grenades.

Police in Quezon City also arrested four robbers preying on Fairview residents.

According to Central Police District director Chief Supt. Napoleon Castro, Mark Beejay Antonio, 21, Romeo Concepcion, 21, and two minors aged 17, were caught in the act of pulling off a robbery.

Police recovered from the suspects a .45-caliber pistol, a .38-caliber homemade revolver, a homemade shotgun, grenade and several bladed weapons. *Margaux Ortiz*

Ma stabs daughters in Pasay

By Margaux Ortiz

A WOMAN who was said to have been suffering from post-natal depression stabbed her two daughters yesterday morning in Pasay City.

Police said Marivic Gadaingan, 26, also stabbed herself with a kitchen knife inside their house in Don Carlos Village.

Barangay tanod Rogelio Basagre, the common-law husband of the suspect, rushed his family to the Philippine General Hospital where they are now recovering.

PO3 Rosalyn Fernando said the suspect woke her husband around 1 a.m. yesterday because she was hungry.

On his way home from the store, Basagre learned from a neighbor that something was going on inside his house.

Police said Ruby Ann, 3, suffered from two stab wounds at the back and on the chest. Two-month-old Clarisse was stabbed twice in the chest.

Basagre told police that his wife was experiencing depression since she gave birth to Clarisse.

She also complained of headaches and body pains, police said.

Basagre said he was not pressing any charges against his wife, but would instead bring her to the province to recuperate.

Couple found dead in QC

By Tina Santos

THE BODIES of a Chinese-Filipino couple on Wednesday were found inside their house on Palton Street, Filinvest II, Barangay Batasan Hills, Quezon City.

Police said the bodies of businessman Tomas Sythe, 75, and his wife Natividad, 65, were already badly decomposed when barangay watchman Eduardo Digno stumbled on the crime scene at around 9:30 p.m.

Digno told police he was on patrol when he smelled something bad. The stench led Digno to the victims' house.

Digno told police that he found the man's body inside the master's bedroom, while the wife was in the dining area. Both had multiple stab wounds. Their heads appeared to have been hit a by a hard object, according to investigators.

Police said that the victim's stay-in houseboy, who has yet to be identified, could be the assailant.

An investigator said they have yet to decipher what appeared to be a man's name scrawled on the wall near the husband's body.

Crispino, 75

BEATRIZ (Betty) Ballesteros vda de Crispino died on Sept. 23. She was 75.

Her loving children, Lito and Vita, Bing and Sally, Linda and Eddie, Flor and Virgie, Cora and Jhe, Ramon and Mayet, and Ador and Bebot, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels (Barcelona) in Sucat, Parañaque. Interment will be on Sept. 28 at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat after the 8 a.m. Mass.

Guinto, 79

VALENTINA "Nanay Tinay" P. Guinto of Ligas, Bacoor, Cavite, and Pamplona, Las Piñas City died on Sept. 20, 2003. She was 79.

Her body lies at the Guinto residence in Crimarcel Subdivision, Talon Dos, Las Piñas City.

Interment will be on Sept. 28, 2003 at the Las Piñas City Catholic Cemetery after the 2 p.m. Mass.

METROBRIEFS

Slain by 6

JEEPNEY driver Jerry S. Papa on Wednesday did not stand a chance against six men who ganged up on him. SP04 Victor Miparanua said Papa, 34, of Sta. Cruz, Manila, was walking with his live-in partner on Tayuman Street at around 10:30 p.m. when he came across the armed men. One of them used a pointed steel pipe to stab Papa. They chased Papa when he tried to make a run for it. When the men caught up with Papa, one of them shot and killed the victim. *Leila Salaverria*

Drug roundup

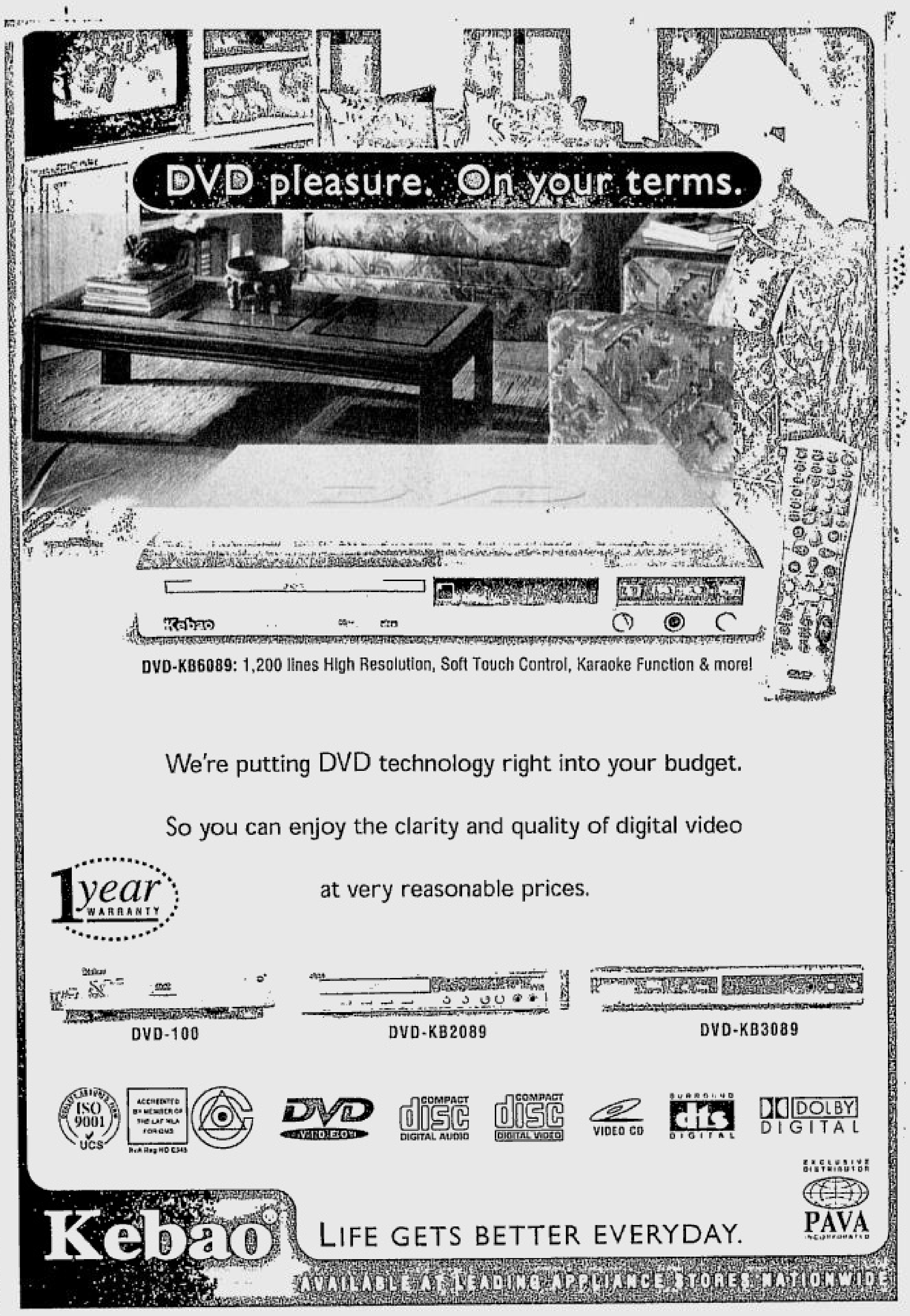
POLICE have rounded up eight suspected drug pushers in Quezon City. Arrested were Jamalodin Mampial, 42, Leo Rivas, 27, Virgilio Daria, 33, Sanika Abubakar, 29, Annabelle Reyes, 38, Rolando Isip, 30, Benny Ibanez, 48, and Vivian Santos, 25, all residents of Quezon City. Central Police District Office director Supt. Napoleon Castro said the eight were rounded up in separate operations between 5 p.m. Wednesday and 12:30 p.m. yesterday. *Tina Santos*

Marker unveiled

MSGR. Augusto G. Laban is calling on all old parishioners of San Miguel de Manila to join the gathering on Sept. 28, feast of St. Michael, for the unveiling of the historical marker in front of the church. The event will take place on Sunday at 8:30 a.m., followed by a High Mass at 9 a.m. "Our parish—home parish of Malacañang—has a proud history to tell, and it would be the climax of our celebration to see parishioners, old and new, venerate this important occasion," said Msgr. Laban, parish priest of San Miguel, Manila.

Rummage sale

The Philippine Cancer Society (PCS) will hold a rummage/garage sale titled "Trash and Treasures Cure Cancer" on Sept. 28 at the lobby of the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) on the corner of Roxas Blvd. and Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Pasay City. The activity, which will be headed by Jane Butt, will benefit many cancer patients that are currently supported by the Society. Donations and contributions may be delivered at the PTTC lobby on Sept. 27. For more information, please call Zenaida Avila at tel numbers 734-2127 and 734-2114.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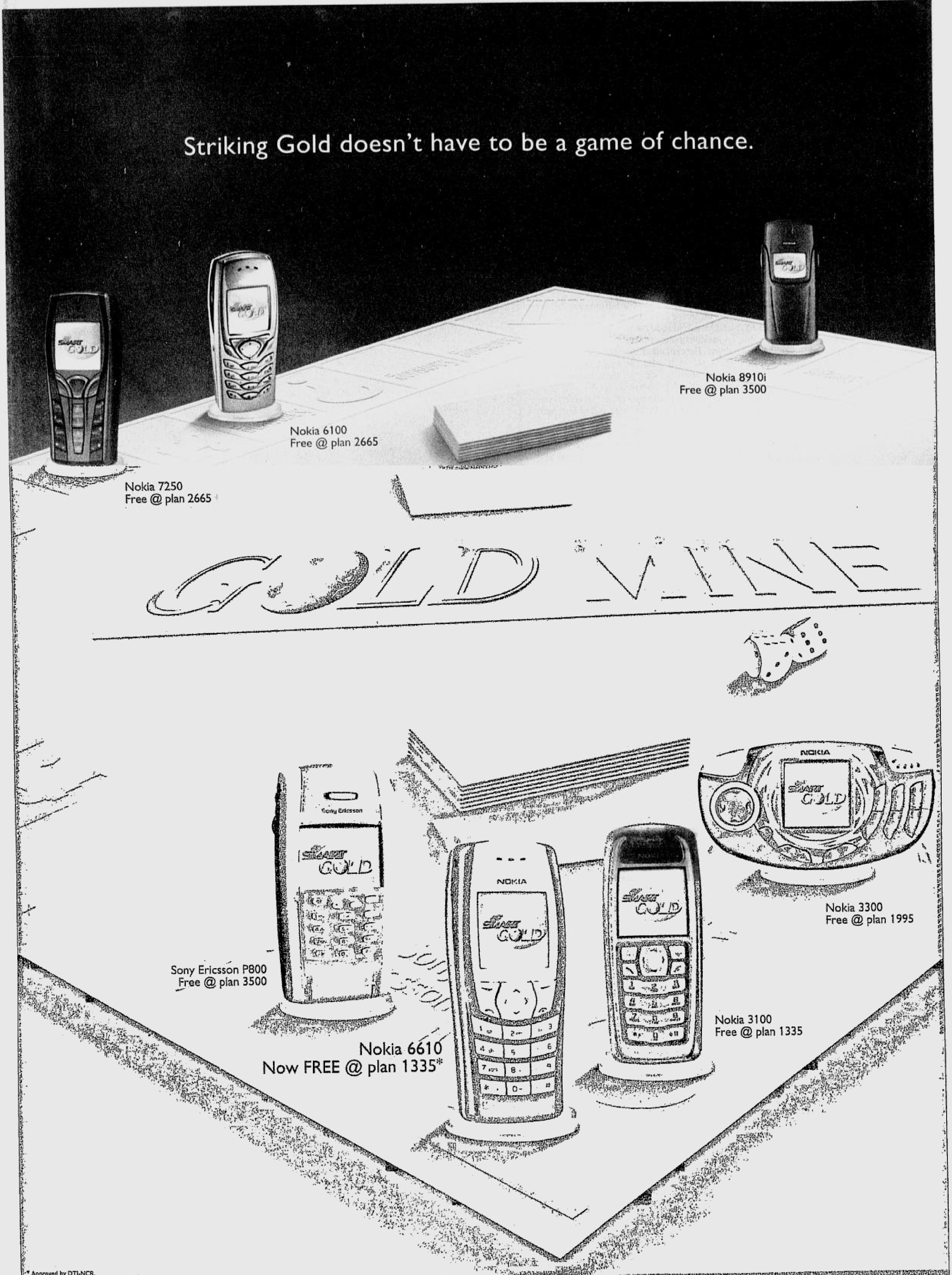

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SPORTS

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RICH Alvarez (middle) grabs a rebound off La Salle's Manny Ramos as teammate LA Tenorio provides support during the heated game last night. AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Tams wait as Eagles, Archers forge sudden death

FEU beats UE, 67-63; DLS stops Ateneo, 76-72

—Page A27

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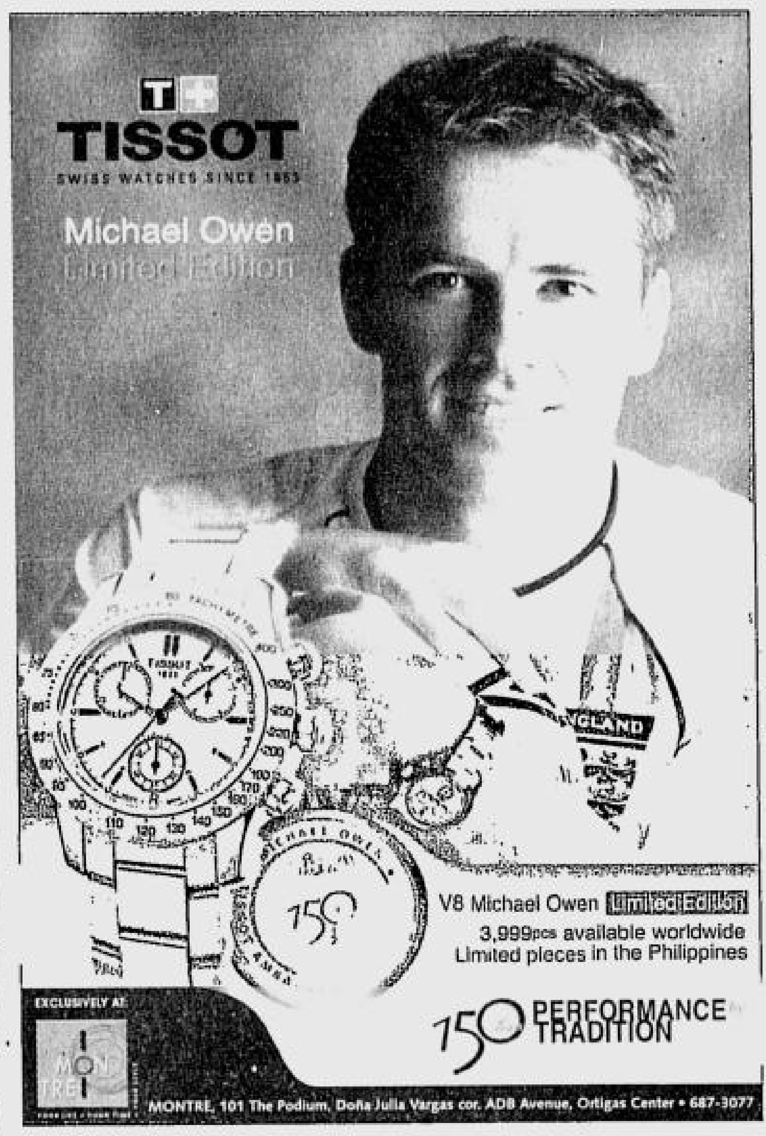

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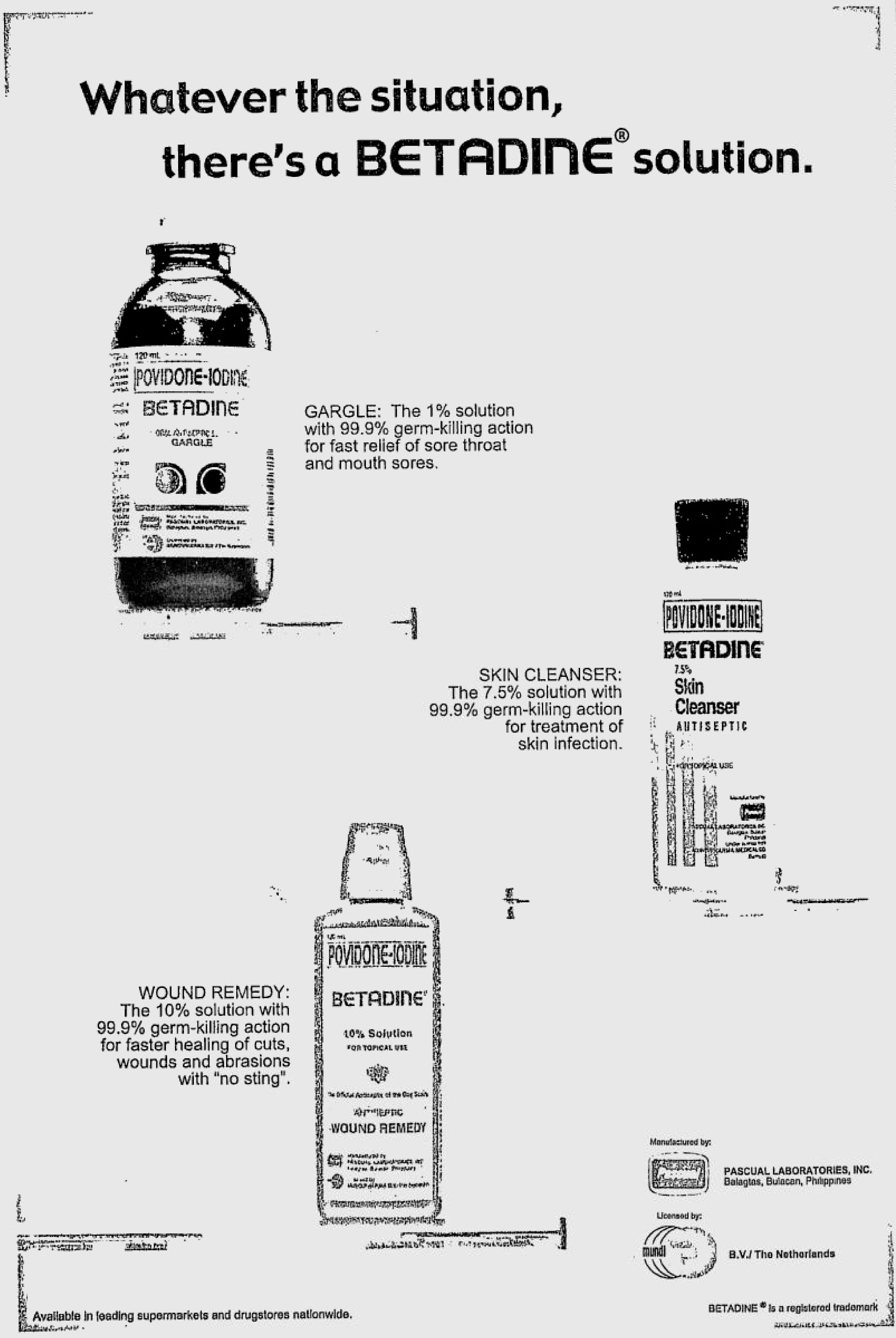

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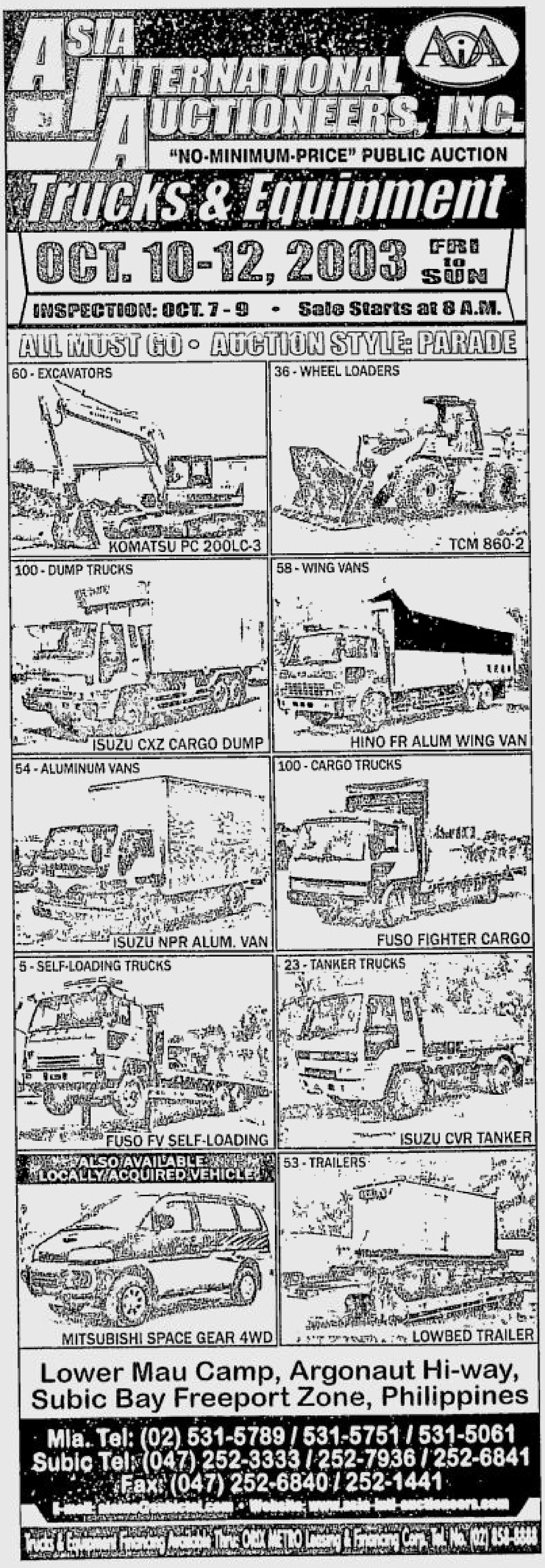

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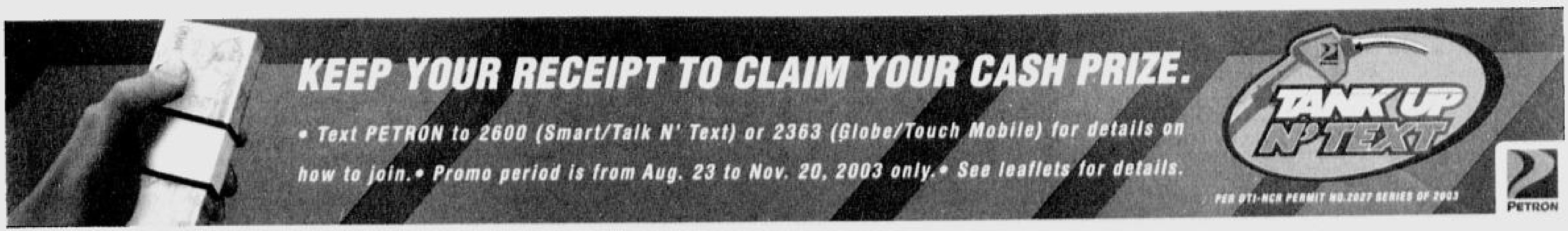

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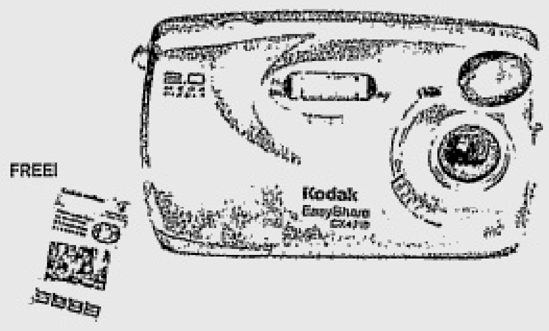

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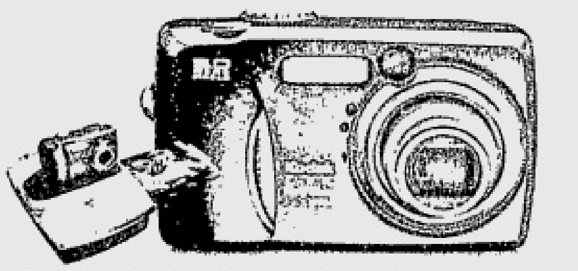

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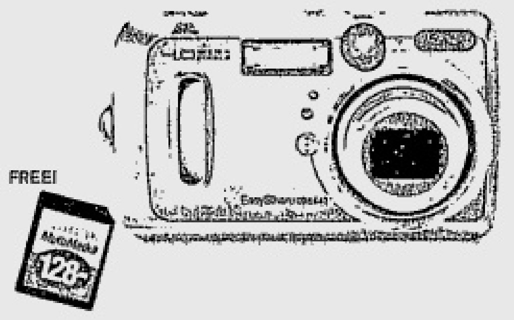

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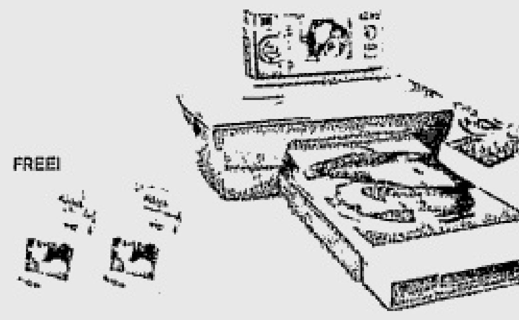

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3812, Series of 2003

New Kodak EasyShare DX6440 Zoom
Digital Camera Offers Stunning Image Quality, Advanced Features, and Effortless Operation

Professional quality Schneider-Kreuznach Variogon 4x Optical Zoom Lens and high-speed, low-light precision Auto-Focus help deliver amazing pictures

Kodak's most sophisticated EasyShare digital camera, which incorporates stunning picture quality, powerful features, and a host of photographic creative controls and exceptional ease of operation is now available for the Philippine market. The Dx6440 is currently being offered at Php 26,900 with a free 128 MB MultiMedia Card at select dealers. The Kodak EasyShare DX6440 zoom digital camera includes a professional quality Schneider-Kreuznach Variogon 4X optical zoom lens, a high-speed, low-light precision auto-focus system, and 4 megapixel resolution to deliver sharp, striking prints up to 20 x 30 inches, all with effortless operation that people have come to expect from Kodak.

"The EasyShare DX6440 demonstrates how Kodak is using its deep and vast knowledge of imaging technology to deliver phenomenal picture quality, performance, and ease of use," said Mr. Buddy Novenario, Manager of Kodak Philippines' Digital and Applied Imaging Division. "Its advanced photography features, new image processing technology, and intuitive controls set this camera apart from the crowd. Whether someone wants to take an artistic portrait or snap pictures of their kids playing on the beach, this versatile camera delivers."

The EasyShare DX6440 digital camera features aperture and shutter priority modes, as well as sport, night, portrait, landscape, close-up and automatic program modes. Its new high-speed, low-light precision auto-focus system combines rapid passive phase detection with highly accurate through the lens (TTL) contrast detection to precisely fine tune and sharply define a subject while providing focus lock in almost complete darkness. An impressive flash range of nearly 17 feet also aids low light shooting. In addition, the camera senses bright backlit subjects and can automatically trigger a fill flash to help ensure that a subject is appropriately illuminated.

The large maximum aperture of the f/2.2-13 Schneider-Kreuznach Variogon 4X zoom lens is one benefit of close collaboration with Schneider-Kreuznach, the German developer of high quality, technologically advanced lenses. Another is striking edge-to-edge brightness and sharpness across the image.

The camera exhibits exceptionally fast click-to-capture times in as little as 0.4 seconds, reducing a common frustration among digital camera owners of significant lag between pressing the shutter and recording the picture.

With a large 1.8-inch high-resolution indoor/outdoor LCD screen, the Kodak EasyShare DX6440 camera is equipped for easy on-camera viewing in almost any picture-taking situation. The camera also incorporates Kodak's Color Science algorithms, which are designed to match the award-winning color balance and skin tones of Kodak film photography, and a 3.8X advanced digital zoom, which delivers noticeably sharper pictures than regular digital zoom.

The ability of the Kodak EasyShare system to help people share their digital pictures is outstanding. A press of the DX6440 camera's red-jeweled "Share" button allows a person to immediately select printing, e-mailing (with up to 32 on-camera e-mail addresses), and mark as favorite options for each picture. Additional features include a joystick control with easy-to-read menu options and the ability to record continuous digital video with audio. The camera's new album feature, when used in conjunction with Kodak EasyShare software v3.0, allows categorization of pictures right on the camera.

People can also quickly transfer their pictures to a connected computer with just one touch using the optional Kodak EasyShare Camera Dock 6000 (Php 3,900). The dock also provides a full Ni-MH battery charge in less than three hours. DX6440 digital camera owners can also receive all the benefits of a dock, plus water-resistant Kodak 4 x 6-inch photo prints in as little as 90 seconds, when using the Kodak EasyShare printer dock 6000 (Php 14,900). Both docks are now available.

Like the entire range of EasyShare cameras, the DX6440 includes Kodak EasyShare software, providing effortless digital picture transfer, organization, editing, e-mailing, and printing. The software's exclusive One Touch to Better Pictures feature - which takes advantage of proprietary color technologies developed by Kodak - helps people get vibrant, true-to-life prints from home inkjet printers, while reducing the trial, error and waste usually associated with home photo printing.

The award-winning Kodak EasyShare digital photography system - consisting of cameras, software, docks and printer docks, inkjet papers and accessories - makes it simple for anyone to take, organize, share, and print high quality digital pictures. More information on Kodak EasyShare products is available at www.kodak.com/go/EasyShare.

Tams wait as Eagles, Archers forge...

DENNIS Miranda of FEU tries to outmaneuver UE's Arnold Booker. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Dennis U. Eroa

FOUR-TIME champion La Salle, displaying courage under fire, pulled off a stunning 76-72 overtime win over titleholder Ateneo at the Araneta Coliseum last night, sending their UAAP basketball Final Four duel into a do-or-die match.

High-Leaping Joseph Yeo more than made up for the absence of main man Mac Cardona as he hit 31 points, including seven in the overtime period which proved too much to handle for the tested Eagles.

The sudden twist of fate means the Eagles, which beat the Archers twice in the eliminations and enjoyed a "twice to beat" edge in the Final Four, will again try to join early finalist FEU Tamaraws in a return match with their tormentors, the date of which has yet to be determined by the UAAP board.

FEU, thriving under pressure, turned back UE, 67-63, in the other game.

"Maybe the Lord went to watch another La Salle-Ateneo game. We're just a young team trying to achieve something," said La Salle mentor Franz Pumaren, author of the Archers' "four-peat" from 1998 to 2001.

The clash was full of drama and bruising action right from the opening buzzer.

Playmaker Lewis Tenorio was lucky to escape ejection after he planted a fist on the ribcage of the hard-working Jerwin Gaco, with Ateneo ahead, 65-63.

Tenorio's action, which went unnoticed by the referees, triggered a bench-emptying incident, 2:08 in regulation, as Gaco stood trapped in front of the Ateneo bench.

To the credit of coaches Pumaren and Joel Banal as well as team managers Terry Capistrano and Chito Mossesgeld, officials defused the heated situation. Only Archer Ryan Arana and Eagle Magnum Membrere were thrown out of the game.

Keeping his poise, the rookie Gaco went on to tie the count with a jumper, 65-65.

Rich Alvarez missed his drive with three seconds left, denying Ateneo its last opportunity to win it in regulation.

Then it was Yeo's turn to shatter Ateneo's bid. Relentlessly attacking the hoop, Yeo made it 73-69. And when Wesley Gonzales tried to keep Ateneo's hopes afloat with a triple, Yeo's split made it 74-72.

Paul Artadi gave UE its last taste of the lead with a triple, 61-60, 1:45 remaining, but FEU came through with its usual deadly closing blitz presided over by veteran point guard Dennis Miranda.

Miranda split his charities off Arnold Booker, 61-61, and a miss by UE's James Yap resulted in an easy basket by Ryan Rizada, 63-61, with 1:03 left.

UE's hopes crumbled when Yap and Olan Omiping both flubbed their attempts.

"We were in a hurry at the start and not playing our usual style," said a teary-eyed coach Koy Banal, in his second trip to the finals. He also steered the Tamaraws to the 2000 finals won by La Salle.

Scores

First Game

FEU 67—Jones 18, Isip 12, Miranda 12, Sinco 10, Catli 8, Rizada 7, Sinco 0, Gaidane 0, Sierra 0, Razon 0.

UE 63—Omiping 20, Yap 15 Booker 10, Artadi 9, Masbang 3, Butel 2, Estrada 2, Canaleta 2, Hubalde 0.

Quarters: 19-17, 31-44, 52-55, 67-63

Second Game (Srs)

DLSU 76—Yeo 31, Casio 14, Araña 8, Benitez 8, Gaco 4, Cabatu 3, Aquino 3, Tang 3, Ramos 2.

ATENEO 72—Gonzales 20, Fonacier 13, Tenorio 13, Bugia 10, Alvarez 10, Kramer 2, Del Rosario 2, Escalona 2, Tiu 0, Membrere 0, Arao 0, Intal 0.

Quarters: 23-23, 34-42, 50-51, 65-65, 76-72.

Baby Falcons, Eaglets set up title showdown

By Dennis U. Eroa

ADAMSON subdued Santo Tomas, 65-59, at the Araneta Coliseum last Wednesday to arrange a best-of-three championship clash with Ateneo in the UAAP junior basketball tournament.

Gener Pandaan, William Johnston and Jomar Canuday shone as the Baby Falcons withstood the Tigers' rally in the fourth quarter.

Earlier, the Ateneo Eaglets survived Lope Juban's sterling performance as it escaped with a thrilling 73-67 victory over the La Salle-Zobel Bengals and booked its 10th straight finals appearance.

The spitfirish Juban scattered 19 points anchored on six triples as the Bengals threatened to force a decider with a strong third-period show. A 16-9 run by the Bengals erased the Eaglets' 28-34 halftime lead.

But the Eaglets, who last missed the finals during the 1993 tournament won by the Baby Falcons, recovered in time even as Mark Intal and Ken Barracoso asserted their might in the shaded lane.

Game One of the title series will start on Oct. 2 at the same venue.

Scores:

ATENEO 73—Barracoso 18, Nadal 11, Intal 11, Medina 10, Dizon 6, Tuazon 5, Reyes J 5, Reyes 2, Encarnacion 2, Audencial 2, Tingson 1, Manlapaz 0.

LA SALLE-ZOBEL 67—Juban 19, Flores 14, Poblete 13, Abelardo 10, Atkins 9, Reyes 2, Salvador 0, Ornedo 0, De Asis 0.

Quarters: 15-16, 34-28, 43-44, 73-67

Second Game

ADAMSON 65—Pandaan 16, Johnston 15, Canuday 11, Racho 8, Bautista 7, Edano 5, Espina 2, Valerio 1, Opelac 0, Balial 0.

UST 59—Panahon 23, De La Cruz 2, Badua 2, Mejica 0.

Quarters: 20-17, 35-35, 48-41, 65-59

RP bets deliver

ATHLETES under the Medalyang Ginto, May Laban Tayo! project are living up to expectations of their benefactor, the First Gentleman Foundation.

Two boxers and three track and field athletes were the most recent athletes to deliver in their international campaigns in preparation for the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in December.

Boxers Ferdie Gamo and Lhyven Salazar won silver medals in the recent 2003 Xinjiang International Boxing Championships.

Long jumper Maristella Torres and high jumper Sean Guevarra took a silver each and javelin thrower Dandy Gallenero bagged the bronze in the Singapore Open Track and Field Championships.

"We're slowly seeing the fruits of the athletes' labor and we are confident they will give everything they've got when they compete in the Vietnam SEA Games," said FG Foundation project director Rod Nepomuceno in behalf of the First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain also lauded the athletes' performance, noting that most of the athletes are "peaking in time" for Vietnam.

Jao, Mendoza split Superbikes honors

ROSARIO, Batangas—Benjo Mendoza of Speedefex and Jolet Jao of Shell Advance battled tooth and nail and came away with a victory each last weekend in the Shell Advance Superbikes Series, fifth leg of the Casino Filipino Grand Prix, at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

Mendoza posted the fastest time of 1:41.928 in the fourth lap as he won Race 9 over Jao in the Expert Division of this event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Toyota Motors Phils., Kilton Motors, MOF Company, Norkis Yamaha, Pagcor Sports and Addict Mobile and sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association.

Toti Alberto of Ducati-Manila checked in third while Jeff Andres of JA Rapid Bikes and Randy Ortiz wound up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Jao made sure he had a trouble-free run in Race 10 and got his revenge on Mendoza.

Sharing the limelight with Mendoza and Jao were Philip Alvendia (Ducati Cup), Rolf Wiltschek (Shell Advance Novice) and Aries Padiernos (400cc Open) who swept their respective divisions.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Parrot Moe 2. Candid Suitor/Parrot Moe 3. Zarafun Mo

Race 2--1. Pen Tristram 2. Live Show 3. Compañero

Race 3--1. Headliner 2. King Aldrin 3. Rain Check 4. Andrei's Billiard

Race 4--1. Here I Come 2. Blue Iris 3. Western Dancer 4. Yonder Girl 5. Bagong Gelo

Race 5--1 Conquer D Sun 2. Ilang Ilang Queen 3. Hasty 4. Nitty Gritty

Race 6--1. Princess Ann 2. Magic Bullet 3. Lady Victoria 4. Bambino 5. Master Strategist

Race 7--1. Extreme Illusion 2. Penthouse 3. Ocean Magic 4. Tenacity 5. Ole Ole Ole

Race 8--1. Easy Rider 2. Awesome Power 3. Naughty 4. Top Quest

Race 9--1. Real Gem 2. Skip Away 3. Peek A Boo 4. Divine Right 5. Sham Sham 6. Top Bullet

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

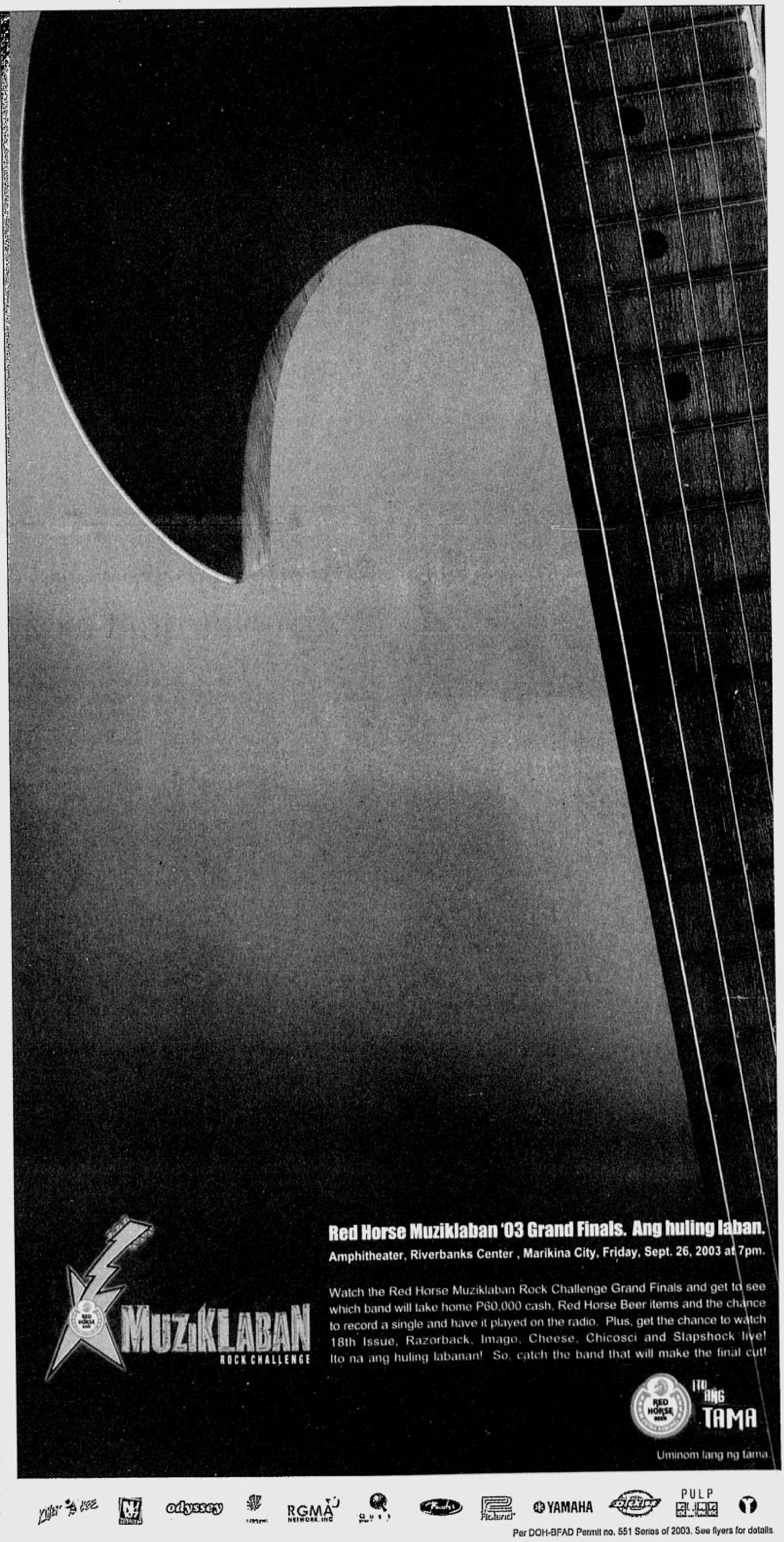
MOTOR SPORTS: 2003 F1 US Grand Prix Qualifying; tomorrow at 2:55 a.m.; Star Sports—See if Juan Pablo Montoya can catch Michael Schumacher as the F1 series heads to Indianapolis.

BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Game-Sixers vs Blazers, Game 6, 1977 Finals; 8 a.m.; Solar Sports—Relive Rip City's first and only title as Bill Walton leads Portland past Dr. J and Philadelphia.

NBA Summer League-Nuggets vs Suns; 11 a.m (r-7p.m.); Solar Sports—See number 3 pick Carmelo Anthony strut his stuff for Denver as they take on Phoenix.

TENNIS: Davis Cup 2003, 9 p.m · Solar Sports—Don't cry for Argentina as it faces a tall order against Spain.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



MUZIKLABAN ROCK CHALLENGE

Red Horse Muziklaban '03 Grand Finals. Ang huling laban.

Amphitheater, Riverbanks Center , Marikina City, Friday, Sept. 26, 2003 at 7pm.

Watch the Red Horse Muziklaban Rock Challenge Grand Finals and get to see which band will take home P60,000 cash, Red Horse Beer items and the chance to record a single and have it played on the radio. Plus, get the chance to watch 18th Issue, Razorback, Imago, Cheese, Chicosci and Slapshock live! Ito na ang huling labanan! So, catch the band that will make the final cut!

ITO ANG TAMA

Uminom lang ng tama.

Per DOH-BFAD Permit no. 551 Series of 2003. See flyers for details.

SMB plays new import vs P'foods

GAMES TODAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
5 p.m.—Purefoods vs San Miguel Beer
7:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Coca-Cola

STILL winless in five games, San Miguel Beer gambles on the services of another battle-tested import when it takes on Purefoods today in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Kwan Johnson, the import of Sta. Lucia Realty during the 2000 season, will be the Beermen's third reinforcement after Shea Seals and Eric Dailey both failed to get them into the win column.

The TJ Hotdogs are hoping to replace their import against the Beermen but the substitute—Derrick Brown, who led Purefoods to last year's Governor's Cup crown—didn't arrive yesterday as scheduled.

The TJ Hotdogs have no choice but to lean anew on Harold Arceneaux against the Beermen in the 5 p.m. tussle.

In the two team's last meeting two weeks ago, Arceneaux cooly sank the game-clinching freethrows for the Hotdogs, giving coach Ryan Gregorio and his troops their only victory in five starts.

Arceneaux outplayed San Miguel's Dailey, something he's not likely to duplicate against the better-conditioned Johnson.

Johnson was voted MVP in the United States Basketball League before bringing his act over to the US National Developmental Basketball League, where he played for the Westchester Wildfire, the farm team of the New York Knicks.

Wildfire coach and former Knick John Starks once said that Johnson has what it takes to play in the NBA.

In the other game, Red Bull Barako and Coca-Cola try to strengthen their respective standings in Group B. *June Navarro*

STANDINGS	W	L
Group A		
Sta. Lucia	4	1
FedEx	2	4
Alaska	1	4
Purefoods	1	4
San Miguel	0	5
Group B		
Coca-Cola	5	0
Talk 'N Text	4	1
Ginebra	3	2
Red Bull	3	2
Shell	2	3

CONE: You take the import out of the game on a bad call like that and you change the whole complexion of the game.

Angry Cone wants veteran refs only

ALASKA coach Tim Cone wants only veteran referees to officiate the games in the Philippine Basketball Association.

This after Cone accused rookie referee Renato Fabrez yesterday of incompetence for making a call that led to the Aces' 91-79 defeat to the Red Bull Barako Thunder last Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Fabrez threw out Alaska import Isaac Fontaine with still nine minutes left in the fourth period and the Thunder slightly ahead, 69-67.

"You take the import out of the game on a bad call like that and you change the whole complexion of the game," said Cone.

"That referee shouldn't be in the league. The PBA should give us veteran referees. There's no way a veteran referee would make that call."

Fabrez blew his whistle when Fontaine rammed Red Bull's Topec Robinson and ejected him after Fontaine supposedly made a second motion on Robinson. It was the import's second technical of the night, which caused his eviction.

"In my mind, that's inexcusable. You don't ruin a game like that. Somebody in the league should be held accountable for that," said Cone.

"It's the first time in 14 years that I saw an import being thrown out by a second motion call.

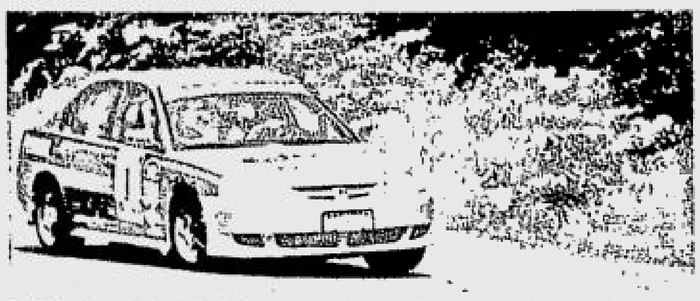
SPORTSWATCH

Guya, Acosta lead executive chess

TYRONE Guya and Ramil Acosta retained their leading positions in the grand prix standings of the 2003 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express (PEACE) going into the seventh leg tomorrow at the Land Bank Plaza in Malate, Manila. Guya, an actuarial practitioner, has a total of 100 points in the Elite section. Defending champion Jenny Mayor, a dentist, is running second with 97. A distant third is physical therapist Ryan Ruiz with 81. Lawyer Quirino Sagario is fourth with 79, followed by engineer Ravel Canlas with 72. In the Classic section, Acosta has 92 points, ahead of Richard Villaseran (83) and Rey Reyes (80). PEACE 2003 is staged monthly by the Active Chess Center of Asia (Acca) with the support of Belgosa Media Systems and Land Bank.

Milo junior netfest goes to Olongapo

CENTRAL Luzon netters take centerstage when the Olongapo Tennis Club hosts the 2003 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop today until Sunday. The Milo netfest is being held in coordination with OTC president Dr. Amel Tejano and organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop with support from Wilson balls, adidas and Sports Kids. It features the boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions. Deadline for registration is at 12 noon today at the OTC clubhouse.



VIP Isada and Robbie Hermoso of Team Blaze negotiate a chicane in their Honda Civic Vtec during last Sunday's Blaze Rally of Subic. The duo won overall honors and the NRC 19 category.

Pasay cockers stage derby tonight

SUPERB cockfighting action resumes at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit tonight as the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association 4-Cock Derby gets going at 7 p.m. with at least 50 tussles. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten. Entry fee is P10,000 in the derby that stakes P300,000. Expected to field their best bets tonight are PCCA members Joel Fernando, Joey Lapid, Mon Torres, Cocker of the Year Rey Briones, Tony Lasala, Benjie Lim, Inger Valdez, Cito Manansala, Capt. Emil Chua, Councilor Ferdie Eusebio, Joey Lapid and Jun Topacio, among others. Slated on Oct. 3 is another 4-stag derby with pit manager Butchoy Olano as host. Entry fee is P7,700. For inquiries, call 843-1746, 843-1890 and 816-6750.

Int'l Golf Show unfurls at Megamall

THE LOCAL golf industry stages the eighth edition of the Philippine International Golf Show, starting today at the SM Megatrade Hall 2 in Mandaluyong. A hundred booths showcasing the latest products of the world's biggest equipment and apparel brands, turf and maintenance care, real estate projects and many more will be up for public viewing. The opening ceremonies is set at 10 a.m., with Comelec chair and Wack Wack president Ben Abalos, Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain and National Golf Association of the Philippines president Rod Feliciano as guests of honor. They will be joined by officials of the organizing Golf Distributors Association of the Philippines (GDAP), headed by its president Gerald Raymundo and vice president Lovell Gopez, as well as exhibit manager Fairs&More. Highlighting the opening rites is the awarding of the GDAP Personality of the Year award to the legendary Bantam Ben Arda in recognition of his tremendous contribution to the growth of the sport not just in the country but also in Asia. Sponsoring this year's Golf Show, which will run through Sunday, are Berocca, Lexber Holidays Int'l, Continental Airlines, New Pagcor/Casino Filipino, Mr. Donut, Coppertone and Bravo Restaurant. Cooperating associations are the NGAP, the Philippine Turfgrass Association and Vantage, the official registration systems provider.

THE MACAU Government Tourist Office (MGTO) recently launched the 50th Macau Grand Prix. An international event that gathers champion drivers and motor sports fans from all over the world, the Grand Prix takes place in the streets of Macau on Nov. 8-16. In celebration of its Golden Jubilee, the Grand Prix will be held for two consecutive weekends simultaneous with a host of other exciting and fun-filled activities. Shown in photo with MGTO's Narz Lim (center) and Mary Ann Bringas (2nd from right) are three of the Philippines' top-caliber drivers who have raced in the Macau Grand Prix—(from left) MP Turbo Team's Mike Potenciano who raced in the Asian Formula 2000, Subic Int'l Raceway's Pocholo Ramirez who competed five times between 1972-75, and Angelo Barreto who joined the Asian Formula 2000 and 2002. For inquiries, call the MGTO at 831-2005 or 830-2013.

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Najorda, Moore head PBL rookie draft today

STARS from the country's collegiate leagues and some Fil-Ams lead aspirants in today's Philippine Basketball League Rookie and Dispersal Draft at the Makati Coliseum.

The players include San Sebastian's Pep Moore and Leo Najorda, the National Collegiate Athletic Association MVP; Nino Canaleta of the University of the East, Nino Marques of PMI, Mapua's Nathaniel Cruz, Jayjay Sagad of College of St. Benilde and Charlie Bolias of St. Francis of Assisi-Las Piñas.

"We have a number of young and talented players from the college ranks, so I'm sure they (coaches) can pick the right players they want for their respective teams," said Commissioner Chino Trinidad.

The dispersal draft will start at 1 p.m. and will be followed by the rookie draft.

Trinidad said majority of players from LBC Batangas were absorbed by newcomer Pop Cola.

ICTSI will pick first in the dispersal draft as well as in the rookie draft. It will be followed by Pop Cola, Welcoat Paints, Blu Star Detergent, Montana Pawnshop, Viva Mineral Water and Hapee Toothpaste.

Letran reaps the dividends

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IT is always nice to know the secret behind every success. We all learn something from it, as we ought to.

For example, Louie Alas tells us Letran's success was their training lasting eight months.

"Hard work did it," said the man who coached Letran to NCAA victory against San Sebastian on Wednesday. "Right after last year's tournament ended, we immediately began training."

Of the few local coaches that I respect, Louie Alas is one of them. Since the time I watched him steer the Philippine Team to the championship of the SEA Games in Brunei in 1999, I became his big fan. In fact, to show my admiration for his coaching style, I picked him to easily beat Thailand for the 1999 SEA Games basketball crown. At the press box before the championship game began, I said to my colleagues: "No way our team will lose the title. For, if Thailand has a king, the Philippines has an ace." Alas, of course, means ace—if you still don't know. As predicted, Alas' boys won the SEA Games crown running away.

During those eight grueling months of training for Letran, Alas drilled in his boys' minds the value of hard work, discipline and patience.

All three were at play when Letran rallied in the last three minutes or so to beat San Sebastian and pocket its 15th title in 79 years of NCAA play.

Erasing an 11-point deficit, San Sebastian grabbed the lead, 58-56, after Letran had gone scoreless for nearly eight minutes in the final quarter.

Suddenly, after controlling the game three-fourths of the way, everything seemed in tatters for the Knights.

It must be stressed here that the Stags were favored to keep the crown they had won back-to-back in 2001 and 2002. With the lead in their hands for only the second time (58-56) after first tasting it at 2-0, San Sebastian seemed set to score a "three-peat," the sports lingo meaning a team has won three straight championship titles.

That's when Letran summoned all of the lessons learned during their eight-month training.

It began with Louie Alas yelling at his boys during a timeout: "This is it, guys. All the eight months that we've been through—suffering together, sacrificing together, sharing our patience together. Mental toughness should now complement, if not take control over, your physical toughness. This is now the time to use it to the hilt. Mind game *na ito*!"

There was nothing really new there. Louie Alas was merely reiterating the obvious: When push comes to shove, mind takes over matter.

I remember Abet Guidaben, a basketball legend who was a two-time PBA MVP, telling me: "When you intend to win a championship in December, start preparing for it in January."

In a span of two minutes or so in the deciding third game on Wednesday, Letran threw all the weight of its eight months of training at San Sebastian and was rewarded with a victory as dramatic as South Korea's sinking of China for the basketball gold in the Busan Asiad last year.

It began with a long jumper by Boyet Bautista, the wily playmaker of Letran, to tie the game at 58. The 20-foot shot that Bautista fired while he was on the run near the keyhole snapped Letran's scoreless spell for nearly eight minutes.

Bautista would next uncork two more heroic acts to seal Letran's victory.

First, he intercepted an inbound pass intended for Pep Moore, setting Aaron Aban up for an undergoal shot for Letran's 60-58 lead.

Next, Bautista, although he was the smallest man on the floor at barely 5-foot-8, plucked the rebound after a miss by his teammate Ronjay Enrile from afar following a San Sebastian turnover on Moore's three-second violation. Bautista drew the Stags away from the paint with his adroit dribbling, then flicked a pass to the wide-open Jonathan Piñera who responded with a layup, 62-58, time down to 46 seconds.

San Sebastian was doomed from there, missing three of four free throws as pressure told on the Stags.

With just ticks remaining in the game, Piñera, a towering 6-foot-5 rookie, closed scoring with yet another layup on yet another assist by Bautista for Letran's 64-59 winning count. Bautista, with 18 points, 7 rebounds and 5 assists to his name, was named the game's MVP. Enrile, averaging 20 points per game, was voted Finals MVP.

"The hand of God gave us this championship," said Louie Alas.

We all know that. And we also know that God helps those who help themselves.

Surely, eight months of training wasn't a walk in the park.

***

FASTBREAK. I will try my best to attend Reuel Aguila's book launch today at UP-Diliman starting at 6 p.m. Reuel is one playwright I respect; his "Sidewalk Vendor" has been a longtime favorite of mine . . . Artistic director Girlie Sta. Maria Royeca will stage tomorrow night the classic ballet fairytale "The Little Mermaid" at the Lagao Gymnasium in General Santos City. The show was a sold-out during its debut play dates in Davao City on Sept. 20-21.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Sex harassment case vs Barredo dismissed

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE BAGUIO City Prosecutor's Office has dismissed the sexual harassment case filed against Philippine Sports Commissioner Mike Barredo.

Barredo, who is visually impaired, yesterday expressed relief on hearing that the controversial case had been thrown out last Aug. 28 by city prosecutor Margarita D.G. Manalo "for lack of probable cause."

"I'm happy for my family, although I can't say that there's a reason to celebrate it," said Barredo.

Just the same, he offered a Thanksgiving Mass after hearing the news.

Barredo was accused by a janitress at the Teachers' Camp in Baguio City of making sexual advances on her in April while he was in the facility conducting a sports seminar.

He didn't say, though, what action he would take against his 20-year-old accuser.

Barredo said he would have kept the whole thing to himself and be "quietly happy" because everything his accuser had said were proven false.

"But my lawyers said there should be a closure to this, and I'm preparing a formal statement to be issued to the media anytime this week," he told the INQUIRER.

Barredo champions the cause of the differently abled and women in sports.

Can Dettori do it again?

LONDON—Frankie Dettori can dream the impossible dream again after securing rides in all seven races at Ascot on Saturday, highlight of the Festival of Racing.

Seven years ago, Dettori, amid high emotion, went through the card, riding all seven winners at cumulative odds of over 25,000-1.

Bookmakers still tremble at the memory of a day that cost them millions of dollars.

Since 1996, the Italian has only twice had seven rides on the corresponding day and the best he has done were two winners in 2000.

His former riding colleague Ray Cochrane said: "The chances of him riding seven winners again are millions to one." *Reuters*

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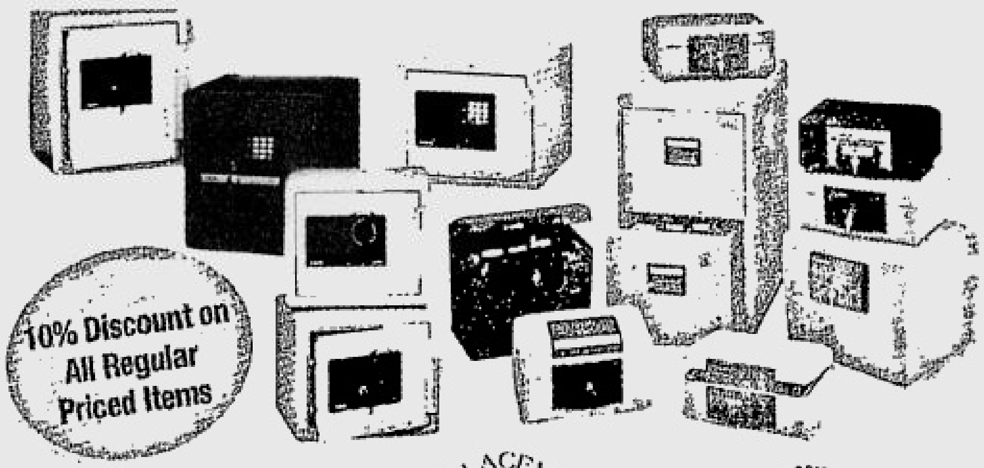

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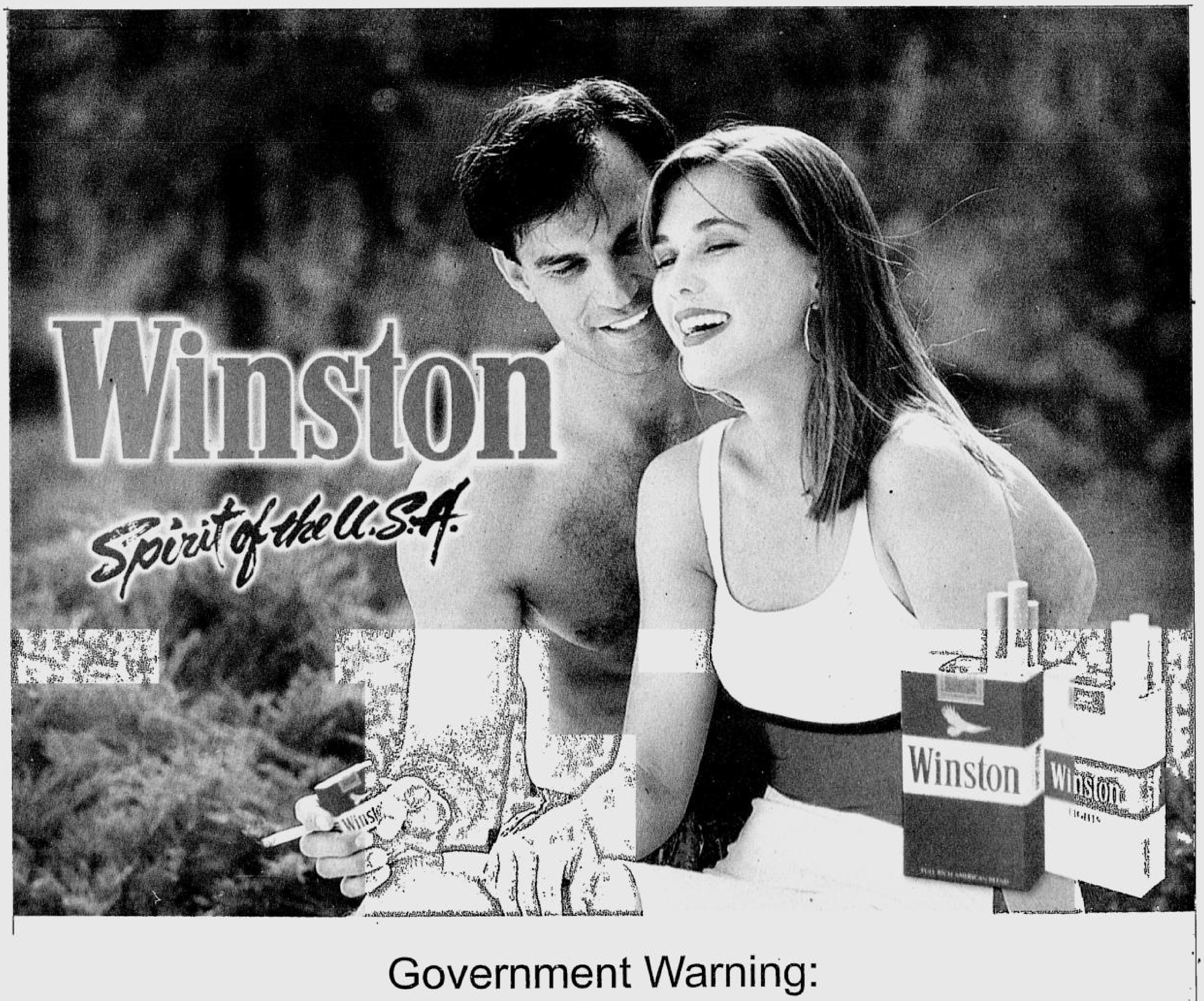

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Boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: It looks like you're selling a lot of stuff at your *tiangge*. Can you describe it for our viewers?

Guest: Well, as you can see, it's a very wide *aray* of products!

(*Aray?*—Ouch!)

* * *

Host: Who provided all these goods for sale for your benefit fund-raising ability?

Guest: Well, to be frank, there's a lot of me included!

(Uh, are you also for sale?)

* * *

Host: Are the prices fixed, or *baka puwede namang tumawad?*

Guest: Well, it also possible!

(*Ay*, it possible!)

* * *

Host: Can you give us a profile of the membership of your orchid growers' organization?

Guest: Membership? Oh, very wide. Most are amateur, but we also have professional orchids!

(Your organization is positively abloom with members!)

* * *

Host: How are your sales coming along?

Guest: Very good sales. You see, *marami kaming regular* customers—*ang tawag doon, suki.*

(Thanks for the very helpful translation…)

* * *

Host: Why didn't you join in the singing of the *kundiman* that the others have just performed?

Guest: It's hard, because the song has Tagalig!

(And you're *tagilid*…)

* * *

Host: What about Filipino games? What does a *balikbayan* like you like to play?

Guest: Here? I like what you call, *passing-tero*?

(Oh, *that* Filipino game!)

Host: On the political scene, what are some factors that keep our electoral system from maturing?

Guest: It's like always starting from scratch. Every election time, there are so many political traincoats!

(*Ay*, traincoats!)

* * *

Host: Any final words before we end our show?

Guest: Id' like to thank my skin care!

(Your skin care thanks to you too, of course!)

Auditions

YOUTH bands with members 16 to 35 years old only have until Sept. 27 to audition for "Banding sa Riverbanks," a showcase for new bands to be held on Nov. 8 at the Amphitheater of the Riverbanks Center Marikina City.

Requirement: Submit a demo tape or CD of your original inspirational composition for peace c/o Jesuit Music Ministry, Loyola Heights of Studies, Ateneo de Manila University, Katipunan Ave., Loyola Heights, QC.

For details call the Campus Ministry—Ministry for Youth Affairs at 735-3390, or visit their office at 2486 Legarda St., Sampaloc, Manila.

Asian folk tales on TV

"LEGENDS of the Ring of Fire," a collection of five-minute animated short stories on the Disney Channel, presents Asia's classic folk tales with the latest in computer graphics. It is shown every Saturday and Sunday.

The series includes the Filipino legend, "How the Durian Came to Be." Other episodes: "How Singapore Got Its Name," "The Magic Snail" (Korea), "Why the Sun the Moon" (Indonesia), "The Cengal Tree" (Malaysia), and "How the Moon Came to Be" (Thailand).

The collection was conceptualized by a Filipino, Raymund Miranda, who is based in Singapore. The series will be shown in different TV markets all over the world. "How the Durian Came to Be" will be telecast on Disney Channel Asia on Oct. 25.

Feedback

FROM **Paul R. Mortel** of Marikina City: "I would like to call the attention of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas to the overloading of commercials in top TV programs. Viewing those shows is no longer enjoyable because of all those commercials.

"As a former advertising man, I'm not against commercials because I know they're the 'lifeblood' of television. What I'm against is the overloading, which deprives viewers of the enjoyment that should be theirs.

"I know the KBP has set a limit to the number of commercials that can be aired. Sadly, however, that standard is honored more in the breach than in the observance."

What priests, militants, Noynoy and pro-gays say

From page A32

night and I was shocked when it came out in Front Page (GMA 7's early evening newscast)," Marcos said. He said Marquez is his friend.

"I don't know what to think anymore. It seems like a domestic dispute that has gone out of way, out of control. There's already a report in the police blotter," Marcos, son of the late President Ferdinand Marcos, said.

"I was thinking, if all couples had a fight, perhaps we would all be in the police stations and in courts everyday," Marcos said.

Marcos himself had gone through a troubled phase in his marriage to lawyer Louise Araneta-Marcos, shortly after the 2001 elections. But he skirted all questions concerning his marriage, saying that his private life had nothing to do with his public office.

In Lucena City, activist priest Raul Enriquez described the Kris-Joey affair as "another entertainment spectacle for the impoverished nation."

Enriquez, spokesperson of Gomburza, a militant organization of clergies nationwide, also said that with the way the whole country reacted to the split, "there is really something terribly wrong with the Filipino people."

"When would this end? Juan de la Cruz is again being amused by another unfolding *telenovela* from a combined team up of a politician and an entertainment star that would help him forget the poverty around him. The affair of this country is really being orchestrated by reel and real life carnival of these bunch of entertainers and politicians," he said.

Enriquez said the report shocked Quezon residents, even those residing in far-flung villages in his parish in Agdangan, Quezon.

He described the morality level of most Filipinos as "quite depressing."

"Here is one rich and famous lady, daughter of a national hero and a former Philippine president, now living a turbulent life… I pity her because most of our countrymen now have been watching her life's episode in the sideline as if it's another *telenovela*," Enriquez said.

"We're really a desperate and helpless nation," he said.

Pastor Noel Suministrado of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, said the turbulent period between Aquino and Marquez stems from the "basic flaw in the kind of relationship that they have."

"Whatever violent incident took place was really bound to happen," he said.

The couple should look at the incident as a golden opportunity to both conduct serious reflection on their relationship, he added.

Militant organizations Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya have lamented the media overkill attending the Kris-Joey squabble and the news organizations' seeming indifference for more important issues "closer to the gut of the Filipino people."

"We're not saying that the media (should) not cover what happened between Kris and Joey. But there are more important issues that should have been given similar, if not more attention, by the media," said Jim Fernando, information officer of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

Almost all the tabloids and at least one broadsheet gave banner headline-treatment to the Kris-Joey affair while the television networks provided lengthy airtime for reports on the couple's squabble.

"For one, the recent dispersal against anti-Arroyo demonstrators in Manila and the case filed against PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane and other PNP officials never enjoyed this (kind) of treatment from the media," Fernando told the INQUIRER.

Gerry Albert Corpuz, spokesperson of Pamalakaya, said there are more problems affecting the Filipino people that the media should look into rather than the domestic affairs of celebrities like Aquino and Marquez.

"There are more pressing problems…closer to the gut of the people. I hope these would also enjoy the same amount of coverage that the media entities (had given) the couple just because they quarreled," he added.

Both spokespersons, however, agree to the social reality that both Aquino and Marquez generate huge interest as show biz personalities and public figures. *Cynthia Balana, Norman Bordadora, Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Laity Week

THE ARCHDIOCESE of Manila will celebrate Laity Week with a mini-concert featuring singer Karylle, Sept. 29-Oct. 3, at the Clamshell 2, WOW Philippines in Intramuros, Manila.

Titled "Ikaw, Ako… Layko (Called to Love and Mission)," the free concert also features Arnee Hidalgo, Anna Tirol, Danny Cruz and Gary Lim.

A Mass will be said at 6 p.m. during the five days of the week by Bishops Ted Buhain and Soc Villegas, Msgr. Josefino Ramirez, Fr. Anton Pascual and Fr. Mario Bije.

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How GMA 7 makes . . .

From page A32

talents who come from a rival network.

"As long as they're free and they don't have a contract with anybody else," she says. "We're open to management, co-management and booking arrangements."

Aside from the usual song-and-dance and hi-I'm-so-and-so routine, the 48 new and potential stars will do more to reveal their unique personalities in the program directed by Freddie Santos, according to Henares.

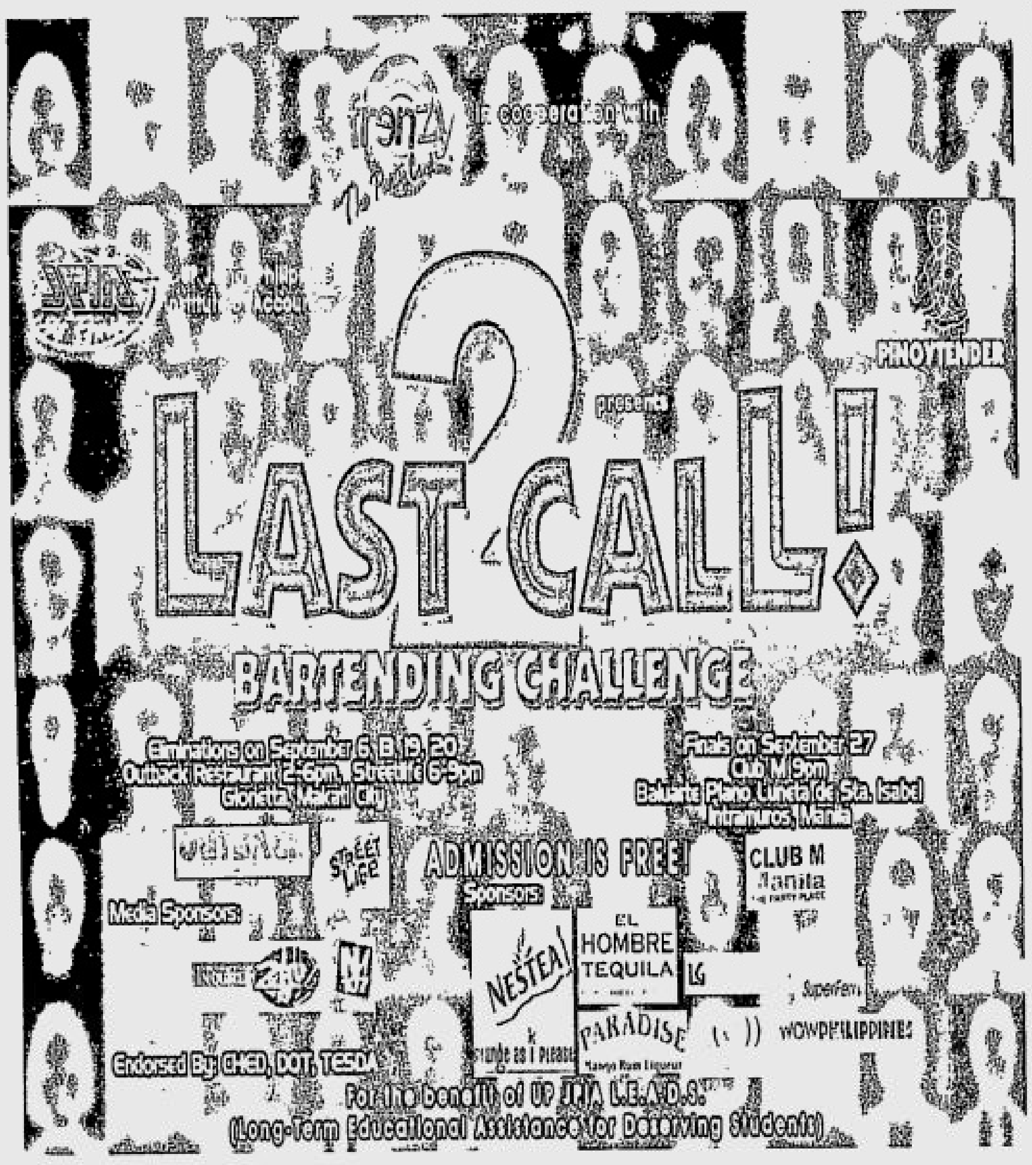
GMA Artist Center was formed five years ago. Henares took the reins only a little over a year ago but she has snugly filled the role as its head. That's no surprise because Henares, together with her husband Ronnie Henares and their Primeline talent management outfit, nurtured the career of "Bagong Kampeon" winner Regine Velasquez for 13 years till the Songbird went on her own a few years ago. The couple is also responsible for the rise of Lani Misalucha, a former multiplex singer, to music stardom. Primeline also takes care of the careers of other singers like Karylle and Jed Madella.

What makes her fulfilled as discoverer and nurturer of talents?

"When I see their lives changed for the better," Henares replies.

"When they become confident and their personalities are enhanced, especially when they become part of something worthwhile. It feels great to help showcase their God-given talents. That's part of why we're here."

Letting go of a talent is a reality of the job, she says. "But I believe that God sends somebody at certain times of our lives. *May panahon na nandiyan, may panahon na wala. Kung sino ang ipapadala* next time, *'yun ang aalagaan mo.*"



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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

KRIS-JOEY SPLIT

What priests, militants and pro-gays say

EVERYBODY has jumped into the act: pro-gays, politicians, priests and even militants have something to say about the split of television talk show host Kris Aquino and Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez.

The Progressive Organization of Gays in the Philippines (Pro-Gay) offered its sympathy for Kris and advised her to be resolute in her stand and see her plight as a chance to raise her consciousness as a woman working for the liberation of women and other oppressed sectors of society.

But for Kris' brother Makati Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, guilt was what he felt for what had happened to his youngest sister.

Noynoy said Monday night on television that he was partly to be blamed for the series of scandals that befell his sibling. He also admitted that he failed to look after Kris contrary to his promise to his father, the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., that he would take care of Kris, who was only 11 when their father was assassinated at the then Manila International Airport.

"*Siguro nagkulang din ako sa kapatid ko. Marami ng nangyayari sa kaniya na hindi ko alam* (I could have neglected her. So many things had happened to her that I wasn't aware of)," Noynoy said.

He said he felt bad and depressed after seeing Kris with bruises in her hands and neck when she went home to their house on Times Street in Quezon City.

Noynoy said Kris could not take some painkillers to reduce the swelling in her arms. The doctor had told them during the medical examination that Kris was allergic to some medicine.

"*Ang dami kong hindi alam sa kanya. Di ko alam na marami siyang allergy sa mga gamot.* So *hindi na lang siya iinom ng gamot* (There are so many things I don't know about her. I didn't know she was allergic to certain drugs so she does not take them)," Noynoy said.

The latest tragedy in Kris' life has led to Noynoy's reconciliation with his youngest sister. The two had not spoken to each other for seven years.

Party-list Rep. Kim Bernardo-Lokin of the Citizens Battle Against Corruption (CIBAC) said Kris was welcome to file a complain before her office through her "Report-A-Mistress Campaign" to pave the way for the conduct of a lifestyle and morality check on Marquez, a public official.

She said her office has been receiving complaints against Marquez in connection with his alleged involvement in some anomalous contracts in Parañaque.

In Laoag City, Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., whose own marriage once became the subject of coffee shop talks, said the Kris-Joey split was "a domestic dispute that (has) gone out of control."

Marcos was giving his regular media briefing on Wednesday when he was asked to comment on the sensational break-up.

"*Ano bang* latest (What's new)?" an amused Marcos asked back.

"I was watching the news last

WHAT/ A30

How GMA 7 makes stars

By Jocelyn Valle
Contributor

BIG movie companies used to go out of their way to discover new stars. Now it's the big networks that seek out new and young talents to lure televiewers as well as advertisers.

The difference? The top TV stations invest more in developing their discoveries into well-equipped and savvy denizens of Tinseltown. After hurdling a series of auditions, the lucky wannabes have to survive a string of performing workshops. The more fortunate ones get to be launched as the promising newcomers who will try to capture the hearts of the public.

GMA 7's Artist Center, headed by Ida Henares, aims to build up new stars that will beef up the Kapuso network's stable of contract artists. To find the future stars, the Artist Center regularly holds open auditions, but Henares adds that they rely more on the recommendations of trusted industry players.

"Or, if we see (interesting faces) somewhere, we ask them to meet us," she says.

Aside from the standard workshops on acting, dancing, singing and hosting, Ida says she has designed a wholistic program for her wards. Before the years ends, she sees them competing in sporting events, enjoying their special day with their fans and testing their entrepreneurial skills in a bazaar.

"And some of them are endorsers for the Red Cross," she proudly shares. "I want them to be able to contribute to charity and cause-oriented organizations. I want them to develop not only into mature and competent performers, but also as contributors to the industry."

The industry's movers and shakers will find out during the big launch on Sept. 30 at the Music Museum if the fresh crop of GMA Artist Center can be real assets to show business. The launch is a by-invitation event called "Am I My Resumé?"

Some of the featured performers, though, are fixtures on Channel 7 shows, like Sunshine Dizon, Chynna Ortaleza, Angel Locsin, Railey Valeroso, Karen de los Reyes, Iza Calzado, TJ Manotoc, Miko Sotto, Sherwin Ordoñez, Isabelle de Leon, Roxanne Barcelo and the Aussie twins Brad and Greg Turvey.

Another familiar face is actress Coney Reyes' son L.A. Mumar, who was launched a few years ago as part of ABS-CBN's own Star Circle. Henares says they don't have a problem accepting

HOW/ A31

IDA AND HER WARDS. "God sends them," says Henares, surrounded by talents (back row, from left) CJ Ramos, Valerie Concepcion, Brad Turvey, and L.A. Mumar; (middle row) Iya Villania, Angel Locsin, Iza Calzado and Sherwin Ordoñez; (front) Charina Scott and Miko Sotto.

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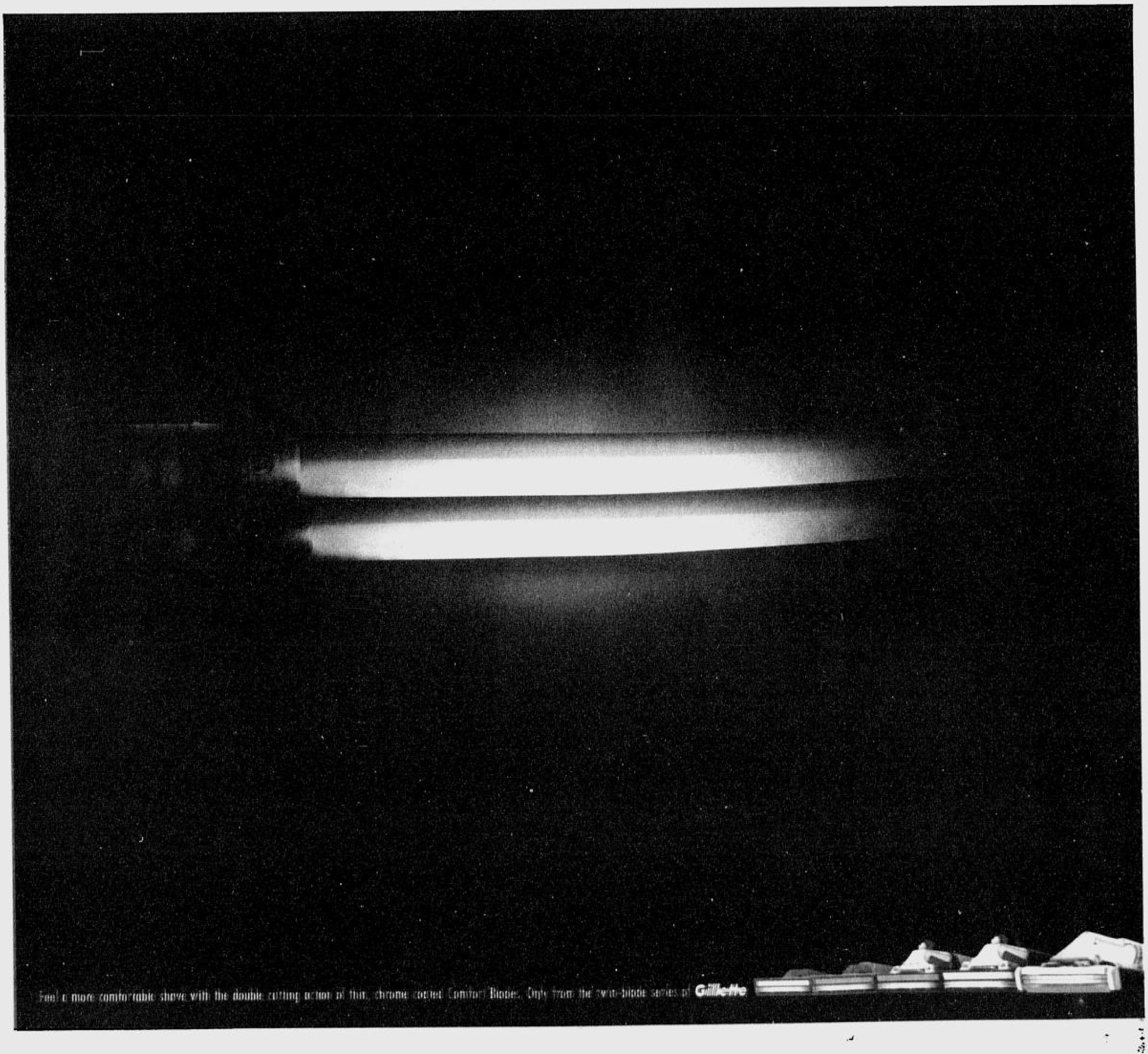

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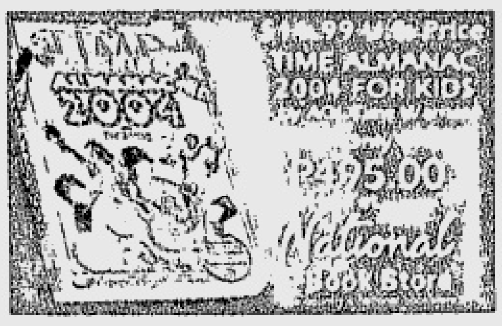

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Gov't allays fears of looming debt crisis

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho has allayed fears that the country was on the brink of a debt crisis as most of the government's borrowings were spread "wisely and efficiently" over a long repayment period.

In a statement, Camacho said: "The relatively long average maturity (19 years for external debt) and the absence of bunching maturity mitigate the risk of a debt crisis."

Camacho was reacting to a warning by Sen. Edgardo Angara that the country was falling into a debt crisis because of the government's increasing dependence on borrowings to finance its ballooning budget deficit, which is expected to top P200 billion this year.

"The act of borrowing is not the problem. It is just the symptom of the real problem, which is the deteriorating fiscal situation as revenues lag behind expenditures," said Camacho.

Camacho assured the public that the government was not borrowing recklessly but "wisely and efficiently" by making sure that all its credits were obtained "at the cheapest cost and the longest maturity available."

Camacho said the government could not just sacrifice its spending for social programs such as basic education and health service just because it lacked the funds. "Fiscal belt-tightening can only go so far and we hope that reforms meant to improve the weak tax administration would bear fruit soon," Camacho said.

He noted that the government's borrowing program was an easy target for critics because it was "the most misunderstood or misrepresented" issue in the fiscal sector.

"For borrowing to be equated with failure of leadership and governance betrays a narrow understanding of choices available to government leaders and limitations inherent in a democratic society," Camacho said.

CAMACHO

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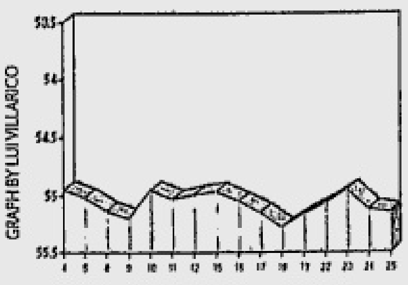

SEPTEMBER

(See stock market report on Page B2)

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Delivered Rec'd
By SHAWEE
Options
Back
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Oktoberfest

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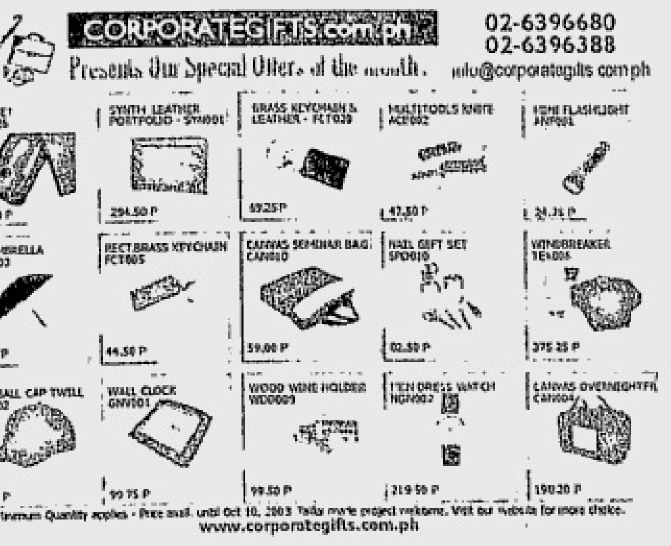
PRULINK	PRU LIFE UK	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week September 23, 2003	Last Week September 16, 2003
Bond Fund - Peso	1.10355	1.10209
Managed Fund - Peso	1.12197	1.12013
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.00390	1.00370

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission



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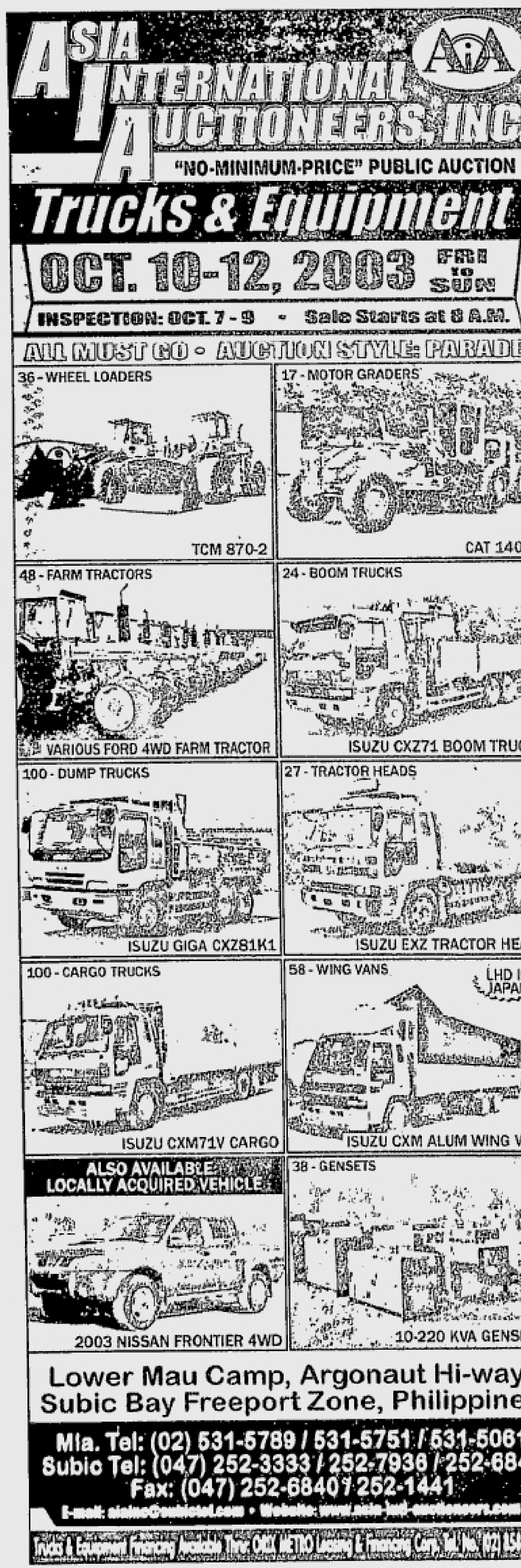

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Manufacturing output up 4.4%

By Doris C. Dumlao

MANUFACTURING production rose sharply both in volume and value in July after a decline in June, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The agency said the volume of production index rose 4.4 percent in July from a year earlier, compared with a contraction of 1.5 percent in June.

The value of production index rose 12.9 percent year-on-year in July versus June's revised 6.6 percent growth.

The figures, based on preliminary results of the monthly survey of the country's top 500 manufacturers, showed an increase in the production of basic metals, machinery, petroleum products, textile, non-metallic mineral products, chemical products, food manufacturing, and rubber products.'

The year-on-year manufacturing output had been up for three consecutive months since March before falling in June but growth was generally lethargic. Production volume was up by 6.9 percent in March, by 0.9 percent in April and 3.1 percent in May.

On a monthly basis, manufacturing production grew by only 0.7 percent in July, led by higher production of leather products, tobacco and rubber products.

Manufacturing, which accounts for roughly 70 percent of the country's industrial output and a quarter of the country's gross domestic product, is highly dependent on export performance.

In value terms, the country's manufacturing output increased by 12.9 percent in July over last year compared with the 6.6-percent growth in June. Volume of sales rose by a marginal 0.6 percent, while in value terms, sales were up by 9.4 percent.

Meanwhile, the capacity utilization ratio, which measures the proportion of plant and equipment used in production, improved slightly to an average of 78.8 percent in July from June's 78.5 percent.

RP gets US permit to issue $1.5-B bonds

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES has obtained the go-ahead of the US Securities and Exchange Commission to issue as much as $1.5 billion worth of securities in the global market.

The approval, which came less than a month after filing, was relayed to finance officials although the government has yet to receive the formal documents.

The US SEC's approval would allow the national government to issue global bonds, a favored form of sovereign borrowing in recent years as it allows the Philippines to access a long-term market to pay its maturing dollar obligations and finance the budget deficit.

Market sources said the government was already preparing to re-open an existing bond facility so it could complete the remaining $225-million foreign financing requirement this year.

By November or December, the government is scheduled to prefund as much as $1 billion of its $1.8-billion requirement for 2004.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government might re-open an existing bond facility but he could not say in what denomination and what maturity.

Since last year, the government had been tapping the global and euro bond markets to raise funds.

The euro bond market, which offers a tenor ranging from 5 to 10 years, could be tapped for about $500 million worth of borrowings while the global market, which offers longer term funds of as much as 20 years, could accommodate between $500 million and $1 billion, according to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

SMC unit gets TRO against Tanduay gin products

THE MANDALUYONG City Regional Trial Court has issued a temporary restraint order on the production and marketing of gin products by taipan Lucio Tan's Tanduay Distillers Inc. following a lawsuit filed by arch-rival Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

In a decision dated Sept. 23, the court prohibited Tanduay from further manufacturing and selling its Ginebra Kapitan products while the case filed by GSM over alleged unfair competition and infringement was pending in court.

GSM, the hard liquor unit of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., earlier accused Tanduay of misleading the public with its use of Ginebra as a component of its Ginebra Kapitan brand.

GSM, through legal counsel Poblador, Bautista and Reyes Law Offices, cited independent surveys indicating that almost all gin drinkers identified the "Ginebra" mark with "Ginebra San Miguel," "San Miguel" and "La Tondeña."

"This shows that the public has indeed identified the mark Ginebra with GSM and its gin products," PBR senior partner Gilbert Reyes said in a statement yesterday.

Tanduay, for its part, has argued that "Ginebra" is a generic term which GSM could not claim as its own. It also argued that its products could not be mistaken for the authentic GSM gin.

"The confusion is that their products are believed by the market to be variants of Ginebra San Miguel or are products of the company," Reyes said. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Share prices end lower

SHARES closed slightly lower yesterday on profit-taking in select stocks following Wall Street's decline and the decision of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to cut output, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 4.38 points, or 0.3 percent, at 1314.19 following Wednesday's 1.2-percent rise.

"It looked like the market would continue to move up because of yesterday's gains, but then the market was shocked this morning when (investors) saw Wall Street's sharp drop," Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas told Dow Jones Newswires.

On Wednesday, the Dow Jones industrial average lost 1.6 percent, while the Nasdaq composite index fell 3.1 percent.

BPI Securities senior manager Roberto Cano said that Opec's decision to reduce its output ceiling by 900,000 barrels a day also hit the market. Opec's move will likely lead to higher oil prices and inflation.

INTEREST RATES

Sept. 25, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 25-Sep-03	MART1 24-Sep-03
1 Month	6.2875	6.2821
3 Months	6.2786	6.2821
6 Months	7.1589	7.1404
1 Year	8.1321	8.1393
2 Years	9.1408	9.1492
3 Years	9.6679	9.7107
4 Years	10.1652	10.1947
5 Years	10.5583	10.595
7 Years	11.19	11.2933
10 Years	11.5875	11.6464
20 Years	12.0333	12.0575
25 Years	12.3067	12.3117

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Sept. 25, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	15,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	23,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	43	43.5	473,300
China Banking Corp.	660	660	660	660	460
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34	33.5	33.5	138,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29.5	29.5	29	29	7,371,600
Philippine National Bank	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	55,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	13,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Abacus Financial	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	100,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1710	1710	1710	1710	260
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.34	1.32	1.32	700,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1220	1230	1220	1230	3,240
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23.75	23.75	23.25	23.25	68,800
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	1,290,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	685	700	685	690	19,260
Ipeople Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	22,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.0525	0.049	0.049	27,200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.73	0.73	29,940,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	645	665	645	665	98,430
Ivantage Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	200,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	365,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16.25	16	16.25	98,500
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.25	24	24.25	797,600
Petron Corp.	2.02	2.02	2	2.02	1,553,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	250,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	226,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	112,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	180,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.76	1,320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	80,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	30	30	13,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.75	18	17.75	17.75	1,093,900
RFM Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	150,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	30,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	53.5	54	271,200
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	63	62.5	63	20,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.37	0.37	0.35	0.35	60,000
Ayala Corp.	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	850,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	1,002,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.032	0.033	0.03	0.03	4,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	3,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	35,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.67	0.69	0.66	0.68	13,740,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	130,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.145	0.15	1,640,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	3,600,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	8,563,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.25	275,700
Ionics Inc.	1.76	1.84	1.76	1.8	697,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	5,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.94	0.95	480,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	60,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	8,460,000
Music Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.4	0.4	2,510,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.115	0.11	0.11	1,280,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	12,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	20,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	1,130,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	100,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.38	0.38	2,090,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	24	24	23	23.25	596,800
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.0014	0.0018	0.0014	0.0016	121,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	10,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.7	5,751,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.195	0.195	1,280,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.41	0.55	0.41	0.55	60,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	1,500,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	110,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	2,730,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.08	6,792,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.215	0.22	0.21	0.21	950,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	380,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	2,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	12,744,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.15	0.2	0.15	0.2	70,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	3,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.205	7,840,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	340,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0046	0.0046	0.0044	0.0044	35,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	50,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.003	0.0032	14,000,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	200,000

DISCLOSURES

ZEUS Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on November 27 with record date on October 13.

***

ROXAS Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 26 with record date on Oct. 15.

***

FILINVEST Land Inc. announced it would explore opportunities to raise funds in the offshore market to refinance its current liabilities and to increase working capital. The company appointed JP Morgan to be its adviser.

***

MRC Allied Industries Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 30, 8 a.m. at the McKinley Room of Manila Polo Club, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of September 26 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

MANULIFE Financial Corp. announced it would suspend its Shares Sales Program and Transfer to Brokerage Account Facility on Oct. 31.

***

LODESTAR Mining Corp. will change its name to Lodestar Investment Holdings Corp. Instead of the formerly approved name of Lodestar Corp. because there is another registered company with the name Lodestar Inc.

***

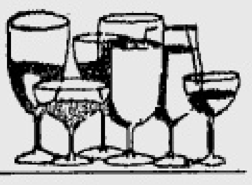
PRIME Orion Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 27 with record date on Oct. 13. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

September 25, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.869414015	1.000000	55.044000
Japan	Yen	0.007787	0.008957	0.493000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.443227	1.660000	91.373000
Hongkong	Dollar	0.112041	0.128869	7.093500
Switzerland	Franc	0.644486	0.741290	40.803600
Canada	Dollar	0.644344	0.741125	40.794500
Singapore	Dollar	0.501827	0.577201	31.771500
Australia	Dollar	0.589034	0.677507	37.292700
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.306261	2.652661	146.013100
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.23185	0.266674	14.678800
Brunei	Dollar	0.500383	0.575540	31.680000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000103	0.000119	0.006600
Thailand	Baht	0.02173	0.024994	1.375800
UAE	Dirham	0.236736	0.272294	14.988200
Euro	Euro	1	1.150200	63.311600
Argentina	Peso	0.300836	0.346021	19.046400
Brazil	REAL	0.298871	0.343761	18.922000
Denmark	Kroner	0.134584	0.154799	8.520800
India	Rupee	0.018995	0.021848	1.202600
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.228824	0.263193	14.487200
Mexico	New Peso	0.080673	0.092790	5.107500
New Zealand	Dollar	0.5172	0.594884	32.744800
Norway	Kroner	0.124626	0.143345	7.890300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015026	0.017283	0.951300
South Africa	Rand	0.122346	0.140722	7.745900
Korea	Won	0.000756	0.000869	0.047800
Sweden	Kroner	0.112757	0.129693	7.138800
Syria	Pound	0.020701	0.023810	1.310600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025768	0.029638	1.631400
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000545	0.000627	0.034500

Retail wars

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

WHEN the going gets tough, the taipans build more shops.

If you want an exhibit "A" on how hyper-competitive the local retail sector has become, go take a look at the Filinvest Supermall in Alabang.

The Gokongweis are scheduled to open a Robinson's department store within the supermall in time for the Christmas shopping season, despite already operating the Manuela mall complex right across from the busy Alabang intersection.

Taipan Henry Sy, on the other hand, is rushing a supermarket also within Festival Supermall by February, even when his SM Shoemart already operates a sprawling mall further down the Zapote Road, as well as in the Sucat and Bicutan intersections of the South Luzon expressway.

Probably in anticipation of the taipans' moves, the US chain Price Smart opened last November a branch of the popular membership warehouse club also within Filinvest Corporate City.

Meanwhile, Filinvest Mall's anchor store, Shopwise, sensing the increasing encroachment within its turf, has decided to open a new front in the underserved Cubao district.

According to the grapevine, Shopwise is close to signing the dotted line with the Aranetas for its takeover of the decrepit Fiesta Carnival and convert the 26,000-square-meter space into another spanking supermarket.

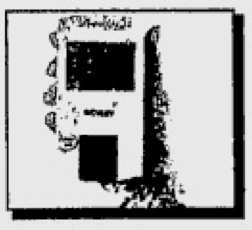
A member of the Rustan's Group, Shopwise is apparently anticipating the termination of the lease of the landmark Rustan's supermarket and department store just across from the block and the planned withdrawal of its high-end sister firm from the Cubao shopping scene.

And despite the serious lack of parking in that section of the Araneta Center, duty-free importer Lucio Co has decided to take over the lease of COD department store and convert it into a downmarket Puregold by year's end.

Puregold is also completing another branch just outside the Friendship Gate of the former Clark airbase, despite its humongous duty-free store inside Clark already doing a roaring trade.

Even at the 24-hour convenience store level, the Gokongwei-Japanese

COCKTALES/ B4



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Flexible - ideal for office or home office use

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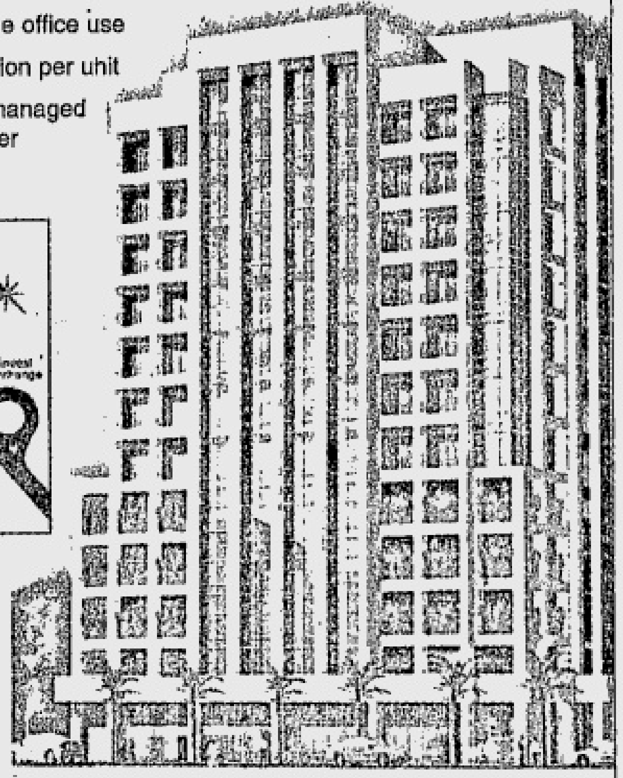
To Makati
South Expressway
Alabang Zapote Road
Alabang Town Center
Festival Supermall
Civic Drive
Asian Hospital
Filinvest Interchange
FILINVEST CORPORATE CITY Alabang

*Right across Asian Hospital, Filinvest Alabang.



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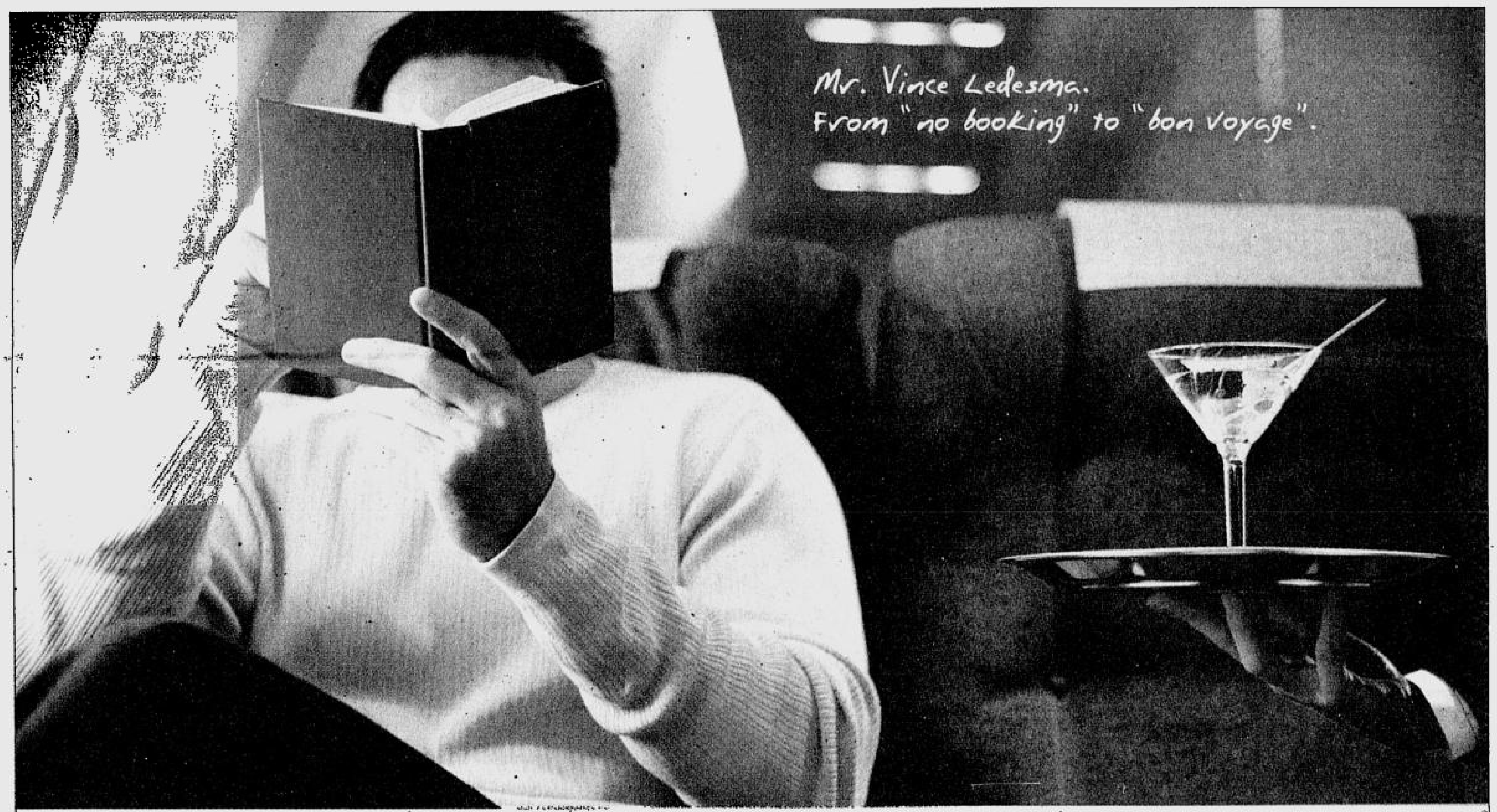
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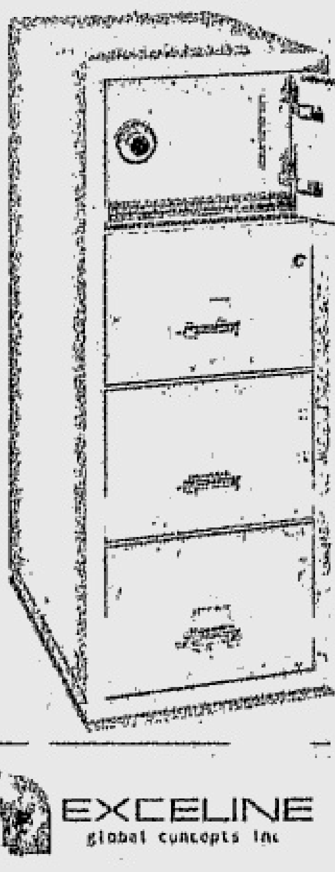

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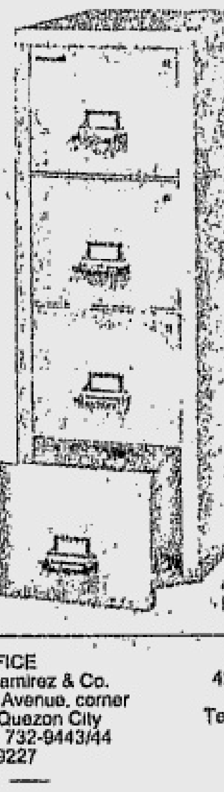

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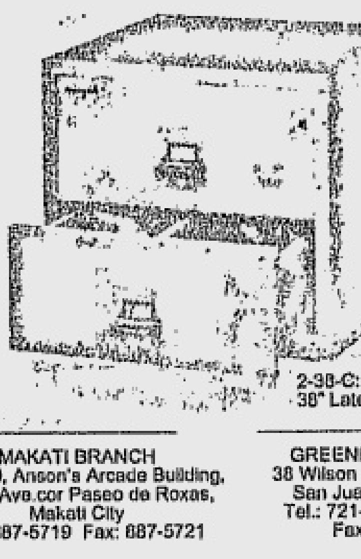

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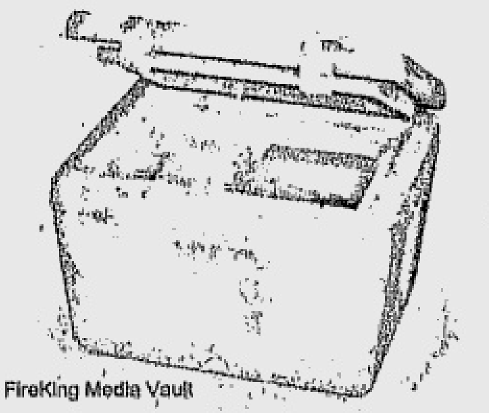

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Rich nations may split powerful G-22 bloc: RP

RICH nations may try to split the group of 22 developing nations, whose firm stand on agriculture issues led to the failure of the WTO talks in Cancun, the Philippines warned Thursday.

The first priority of the new bloc, known popularly as the "G-22" and of which the Philippines is a key member, would be to keep the group intact, Philippine Agriculture Secretary Lito Lorenzo said.

"Of course, there will be tremendous pressure to begin to attract members of the G-22 to pull out of the grouping as they settle their concerns with the developed nations" individually, Lorenzo told a media forum.

The WTO conference in Cancun, Mexico this month foundered amid disputes between developed and developing countries over reductions in farm subsidies and on proposals for a series of trade and investment issues.

"I think the developed nations will be more understanding the next time around ... they are under pressure to arrive at some improvements so they will probably work on a parallel tack of bilateral discussions," Lorenzo said.

He said that the problem with such bilateral negotiations, however, was that "the one coming from a stronger position will be able to dictate more favorable terms for themselves.

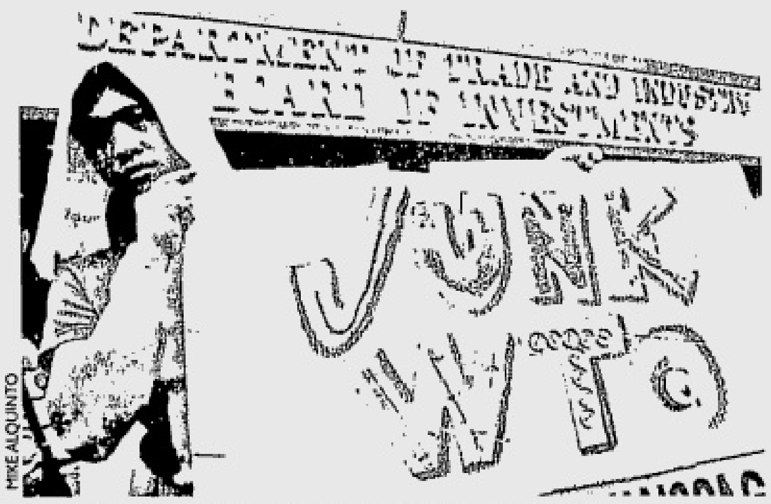
"The weaker one in the bilateral meeting, if not prepared, is better off working within a grouping to push forward his or her concerns," Lorenzo said.

He said that for rich countries, "WTO Cancun was a failure but it was a resounding success for developing countries, especially the Philippine delegates," because of the united stand of the G-22.

The G-22, led by China, India and Brazil, opposed agricultural subsidies of wealthy nations while pushing for greater market access for their own agricultural products.

This new bloc has shown the WTO that "before any issue is taken up, the matter of agricultural reform must be resolved," Lorenzo said.

He conceded that the bloc had overtaken the 17-nation Cairns group of agriculture-exporting countries, led by Australia, Canada and New Zealand, which he said had become a "microcosm of the rich and poor WTO membership."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MIKE ALQUINTO

A FILIPINO militant worker holds up a protest placard with text "Junk WTO" during their protest rally held in front of the Department of Trade and Industry Board of Investments in Manila.

The Philippines would remain a member of Cairns but "the dilemma here is that the common (focus) of Cairns is the trade relationship with the United States."

He said the stand at Cancun was "the first time (developing countries) did not break ranks."

In the past, such countries had been willing to "bend over backwards" to open their markets only to find they did receive the full benefits promised them under liberalized trade, he said.

Lorenzo said that many ministers at Cancun had "their backs to the wall" as there was growing political pressure on their governments from their electorates who feel that their lives are not getting better despite trade liberalization.

Lorenzo said the Philippines had been "too gung-ho" in opening its market in the past in expectation of reciprocal treatment from other countries that did not materialize. *AFP*

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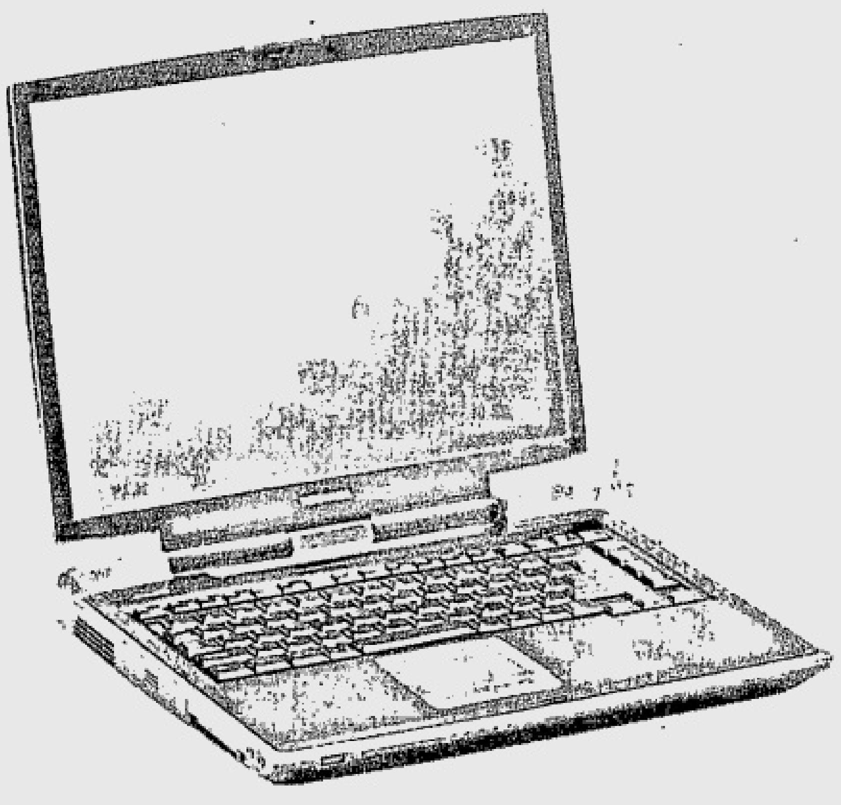

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DTI calls for more investments

By Michelle V. Remo

TRADE and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II has urged the local business community to show their faith in the economy by investing more and developing the competitiveness of domestic industries.

Roxas said in a meeting with various business groups late Wednesday that the Philippines and other developing countries have more time to prepare their industries for further liberalization following the collapse of the Cancun round of talks of the World Trade Organization.

Discussions are set to resume in December this year in Hong Kong to meet the January 2004 deadline set by the WTO for member-countries to fulfill the commitments made during the WTO Doha round of talks held in 2001.

"They (business sector) acknowledged that we were able to buy some time after Cancun. What is important now is to use the time productively through various reform efforts," he said in a statement.

Members of the business community, for their part, said they would be able to invest more once the business environment improves.

Business organizations present during the meeting include Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Makati Business Club, Employers Confederation of the Philippines, Foreign Buyers Association of the Philippines, Management Association of the Philippines, Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc., Garment Business Association of the Philippines and Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines.

They said in a meeting with Roxas that they would challenge presidential, senatorial and congressional candidates in the 2004 national elections to disclose their views on various local issues that affect the country's business climate.

Cocktales

From page B3

venture MiniStop is aggressively setting up branches, unfazed by the static market demand and the red ink that is currently staining market blazer 7-Eleven.

Within the Rufino St. block between De la Rosa and Legaspi streets in Makati's Legaspi Village, two MiniStops serve the office buildings in the same stretch, in addition to two other MiniStops within a two-block radius.

Banking maneuvers

- THE barely surviving Cocobank has hired an outside public relations firm for about P140,000/month retainer. The monthly PR fee is on top of out-of-pocket and representation expenses.
- A NUMBER of Banco Filipino officers have applied for early retirement, and then were promptly re-hired, to enable the officers to enjoy their retirement benefits while they can. According to the grapevine, the officers include executive vice president Lualhati Nicolas, vice president Josefina Cortez, and assistant vice president Maria Mapili.

Heard through the grapevine

THE bar examiner for mercantile law, whose test questions leaked out, is none other than Marcial OT Balgos, the law firm partner of Hernando Perez, the ex-justice secretary.

Kris crossed (A personal aside)

THE Erap and Jose Pidal jokes have momentarily stopped being passed around in text messages, replaced by Kris Aquino jokes too raunchy to see print even for Cocktales.

But imagine if Kris's penchant for actors had instead been for senators, and the gun-cocking Joey Marquez had shacked up with Kris's aunt, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, the present Senate would arguably have been reduced for good by death, disease, or dick-capatation.

In any case, thank you, Kris and Joey, for snatching the country out of the media and congressional flagellation over politics. You two should have staged this public brawl shortly before July 27. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

Women and the WTO

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

"What is the involvement of women in WTO?" asked Cleotilde Manuzon, the newly elected chair of the multi-awarded rural women's group Samahan ng Kababaihang Barangay ng San Miguel, Bulacan.

Her group of farmers had been experiencing the difficulties brought about by the too rapid liberalization in agriculture that she felt WTO was responsible for.

I replied that with more women involvement and the wake-up call from the recently failed negotiations, WTO might still reengineer itself and become a boon rather than a bane for our farmers. Here's why.

Women involvement. Last Feb. 19, seven months prior to the WTO 5th Ministerial Meeting in Cancun, Mexico, Executive Director Arze Glipo of the Integrated Rural Development Foundation of the Philippines presented a paper at the International Workshop on the Review of the WTO-Agreement on Agriculture (AOA).

Held in Geneva, Switzerland, she gave an analysis from the perspective of rural women in Asia: "As farming in the South ceased to be viable under intense competition from highly subsidized agricultural imports from the North, male and female workers lost their jobs. Their toll, however, is much heavier on women in Asia, who have to take on more jobs and face up to riskier and oftentimes exploitative working conditions in order for their families to survive."

On Sept. 8, two days prior to the start of the Cancun meeting, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) gave an incisive analysis of the WTO-AOA and its impact on women: What is on the table now are measures that would push developing countries for more tariff reductions and withdrawal of protection of agricultural products, while allowing developed countries to maintain their subsidies to their own agriculture. What the AOA further ensures is the increase of women's burden in both production and reproduction work."

Breaking the deadlock. Some groups blame trade officials of certain countries for having included onerous provisions in the AOA, possibly without the knowledge or support of their citizens. This is partly why Ms Glipo suggested in her Proposal for Action that "developing countries should seek alliances among themselves."

It should be noted, however, that regarding the WTO-AOA, alliances among women have crossed the boundaries between developed and developing countries. The United States-based Women's Edge Coalition acknowledges the negative impact of WTO on women in developing countries. They have proposed a solution to "break the current agriculture deadlock at WTO."

It is a Trade Impact Review (TIR), which will require trade negotiators to forecast how trade agreements will affect, negatively or positively, poor women and men in developing countries. This should be done before the trade agreements are locked into place.

Developed country inputs. The response from some sectors in developed countries is encouraging. The Agricultural Policy Analysis Center of the University of Tennessee, in their publication on "Changing Course to Secure Farmer Livelihoods Worldwide," stated: "Foreign competitors charge America with dumping excess US production on world markets for less than the cost of production which, in turn, ratchets up the cost of competitors' farm programs and damages the economies of developing countries. The outcome of this "race to the bottom" is certain: all farmers around the world will lose."

The developing nations also have allies in Europe. Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende said in a policy statement: "The government will endeavor to create a level playing field for poor countries, by for example, improving access to markets and dismantling subsidies that distort trade."

Despite this support, the result has still been negative because of the lack of unity among the developing nations. It is therefore fortunate that Ms Glipo's recommendation of forging alliances among developing nations was carried out in Cancun.

The Group of 20 (now comprising 32 developing countries where the Philippines plays a very active role) succeeded in ensuring that no deal was better than a bad deal.

Within three days of the start of the Cancun meeting, other developing countries likewise entered into an alliance comprising the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of states (ACP), the African Union and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Conclusion

The WTO has caused hardships for the developing nations' farmers, with its negative impact felt even more by the women than the men. Hopefully, the newly forged alliances among developing nations will prevent further abuse. But we must go beyond preventing the negative to also promoting the positive.

Implementing the Women's Edge Coalition's recommendation of first knowing the impact of trade agreements on the poor men and women in each country before trade agreements are locked in (a process we should likewise undertake when we decide our own tariff levels) may turn out to be a key unifying mechanism.

With more women involvement, unity among developing nations, and a common vision of fair rather than free trade, we can tell

Cleotilde Manuzon and the women farmers of San Miguel our hope: the WTO can still reengineer itself to become a boon rather than a bane to farmers in the developing nations.

(The author is chairperson of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative, former undersecretary of Agriculture, former undersecretary of Trade and Industry and former chairperson/cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635)

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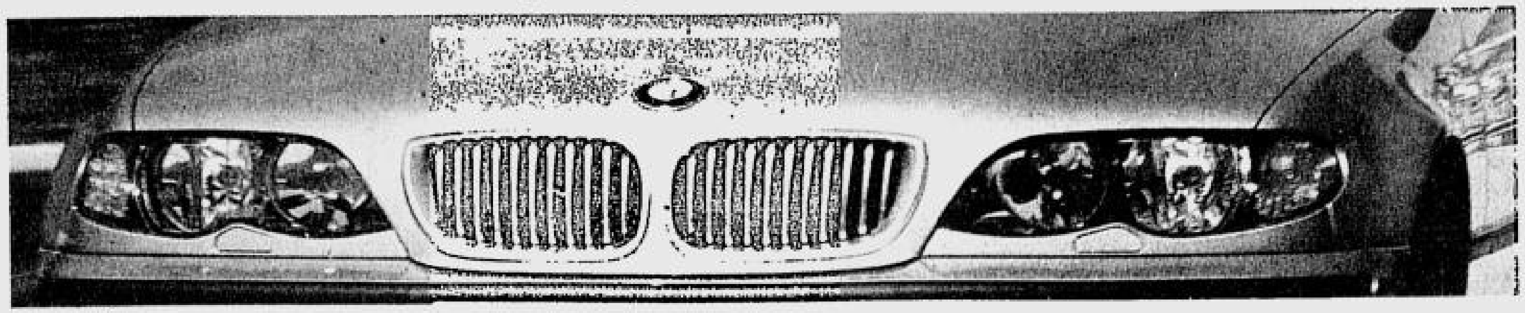

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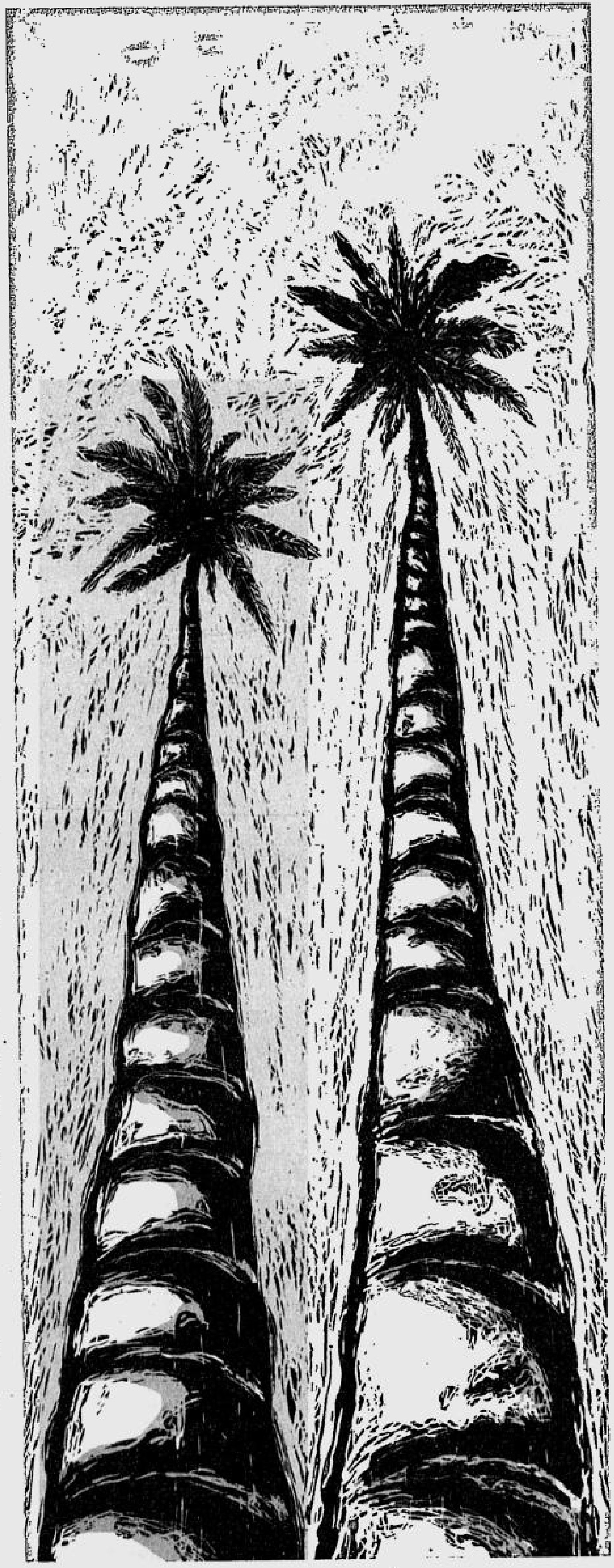

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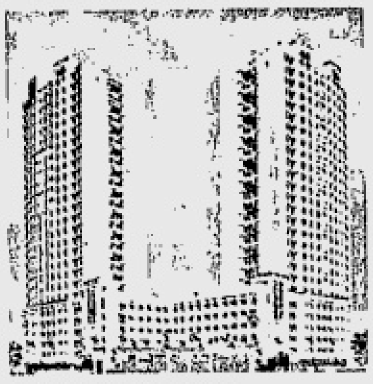

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BUSINESS Friday

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Telecom trends that impact on youth

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By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

TEEN'S definition of a state-of-the-art cell phone: what Daddy can't afford to buy for me.

* * *

Today's Filipino youth are different from the teens of just two decades ago. They benefit from the telecom boom that began in the mid-90s. They are the children of the Internet age, surf-savvy. They can't live without their cell phones. The psyche of this wired Pinoy age bracket deserves study.

Cornucopia of information

There is an explosion of information and the channels that deliver it. Driving this is the availability of fiber optics and cable TV, as well as the compression of signals. Greater telecom capacity is the equivalent of getting larger pipes to convey the information. In the future it will be theoretically possible to have 600 channels on cable TV.

The wave impacts beyond entertainment. Expanded telecom reach provides information to even remote communities. Rural Filipinos will get information available to their Metro Manila cousins. This can only benefit public health, education, and social welfare. Recall how the government released vital advisories during the SARS campaign.

Niche audiences

More channels cater to niches: stations and programs target specific audiences and focus their content accordingly. The youth tune in to the MTV channel and My MYX. Religious people can watch EWTN. There's ESPN for the sports buffs. The Lifestyle channel caters to the needs of women.

Kids get their fill watching Nickelodeon.

Specialized channels and programs allow the youth access to very informative programs. For example, children get to watch the Knowledge Channel with its rich array of features. Those with cable TV benefit much from the Discovery Channel and National Geographic. The Hallmark channel presents the time-tested greats of literature.

Visit an Internet café: you will find most of the youth there caught up in their video games. Friends take on the roles of terrorists and counter-terrorists in a game of cat and mouse. They display a mastery of the keyboard, as nimble fingers push their troops forward, unleash shots, and reload ammo. The youth are comfortable with high technology, and accept relentless change as part of life. Incredibly, they can even learn the basics of flying a jet through simulator CDs.

Power to the youth

Another youth trend is that power over information is becoming more democratized. Video cameras are commonly used for family events. Schools and even individuals offer short courses in video production. Shopping centers advertise their video editing services and facilities. What used to be the preserve of broadcast professionals is now a popular hobby among students.

The Internet speeds up the pace of democratization. High school students are taught how to make their own websites. Think of that power—teens broadcast content that can be viewed globally. Anyone can become a publisher. Add to this the effect of digital cameras, including those on cell phones. Pictures can be instantly zipped through the Internet and shared with everyone.

The cell phone is another deadly weapon. The Filipino youth tasted power when they used their text messages to bring down a corrupt President.

Interactivity

The Filipino youth are immersed in an interactive culture. They no longer comprise passive audiences. They actively participate in the programs. The show "Debate" does not confine the arguments to the experts but pulls the studio audience into the fray. TV talk shows ask viewers to phone in their comments.

The Net is a prime promoter of this interactivity. Youth can post their comments about products in company websites. School sites often feature a forums section: readers can write their 2-cents worth on the supplied "threads" or topics. They can jot remarks on campus life, dorm food, alumni, or the victories of their UAAP team. In effect the community creates the content of such forum sites.

Immediacy and the cell phone

Filipino youth and cell phones go together. The mobiles rush the delivery of information. The youth are no longer tied down to phone wires, so messages fly anytime, anywhere. In a word, knowledge has acquired the wings of immediacy.

Telecom giants naturally seek forms of knowledge that people want in real time. Examples include breaking news, stock market movements, and live scores of basketball games. Other bits of information that can't wait are traffic conditions, street directions, and flight schedules.

Globalization

Finally, the Filipino youth are becoming more attuned to a global worldview. They watch MTV along with 140 million households across the planet. They get round the clock world news from CNN. Cable TV floods Filipino homes with American movies and news commentary.

Globalization means more than Western culture, though. Filipino youth are exposed to Japanese animé, Taiwanese pop idols and Mexican telenovelas. This trend of globalization will accelerate with the deluge of films available in CD and DVD formats. *Comments to <darroyo@philonline.com>*

Can the Pinoy change the world?

By Robert Labayen
Contributor

Filipinos do not run out of jokes about his country and his people. But if you tell him that a Filipino played lead role in designing the lunar rover, he might think it's a joke.

It's not.

It's true that Filipinos have won global awards for breakthroughs in various sciences. Among the things we contributed to the world are the Quink ink, the one-chip camera and the touch tone technology.

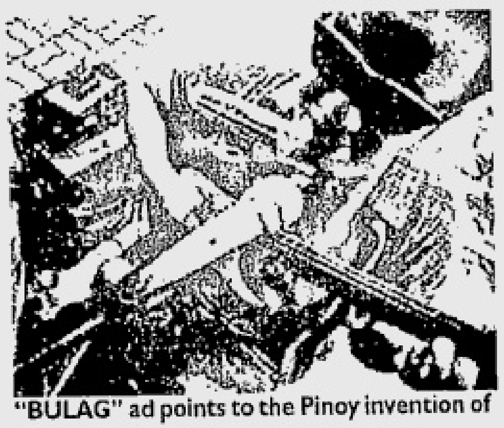
Then again, why does it sound unbelievable? Perhaps, the sad state of our economy makes us forget that we were once a proud race, the first Asians to establish a Republic.

It's about time to bring back our faith in ourselves. That is why the coming Philippine Advertising Congress chose "What's the Big Idea?" for a theme.

Congress Creative Committee chair David Guerrero said that the aim of the Congress is to encourage big new Filipino ideas that may change the country as a world.

"Instead of us importing or manufacturing cheap imitations, we should be coming up with new entrepreneurial ideas," he explained.

J. Walter Thompson, one of the country's leading ad agencies, won the bid to create the communications campaign when it chose to highlight some of the best Filipino inventions.



"BULAG" ad points to the Pinoy invention of the sing-along system.

JWT creative director Cynthia Dayco searched the net and found long lists of Filipino inventions. Many of them made an impact but others were not "merchandised" well enough.

We have created a campaign that would make Filipinos feel good about themselves as ordinary people who can do extraordinary things.

This year's AD Congress, to be held in Baguio on Nov. 19-22, will bring together 2,500 delegates from advertising agencies, marketing companies, media networks and marketing communication production groups. This gathering of brilliant minds and patriotic hearts promises to help bring the country forward.

(The author is the managing partner of J. Walter Thompson)

AD Congress commercial "Katipunero" remembers Filipino greatness.

Get a jelly franchise for ₱135,000

THE PRODUCT is often confused for food—different colored jellies cut in squares.

The jelly is not food for humans but for indoor houseplants and not for humans.

Magic Jelly, the gel plant food substitute from Japan, recent opened its business to franchising.

"The people's response to the product is amazing. I didn't expect its quick and positive turnout when I decided to be the Philippine distributor," says its distributor, Carol Ngo.

Magic Jelly offers two options for franchising. The Rose Franchise for the franchisee who wants to operate a cart set-up or the Jasmine Franchise if the franchisee prefers a larger set-up, kiosk style.

The franchisees that will be given preference are those who have background in sales and/ or marketing, has substantial net worth, has hands-on management style and can follow rules and procedures of the franchise program.

Franchise costs from P135, 000 to less than P300, 000, depending on the type chosen. The cost includes the cart; signage, initial stock of approximately 2-weeks supply, uniforms for a staff of 6, accessories, kits, equipment, wares, accounting forms and bags. The franchise cost will be VAT exclusive and since all essential items are imported, the prices may change depending on the peso-dollar exchange rate.

There will be no royalty fees for franchisees but a minimal 2.5 percent to 5 percent on net sales monthly to cover for marketing, advertising and promotions expenses will be charged. The franchise agreement is for two years and subject to renewal if all criteria are met.

The franchise fee will include training for the franchisee, the accountant, and at least three sales staff. The training will be conducted classroom style, and will include all aspects of the business accounting, sales and marketing, operations, on-site training. A two-day refresher course for the franchisees will be conducted yearly.

For inquiries, call 742-4112 or 0917-5370748.

Not all trade exhibits are created equal

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

COUNTRIES like Hong Kong, Singapore and Germany earn a significant amount of money from hosting exhibitions and conventions that attract visitors and exhibitors from all over the world.

The Philippines is far from being an exhibition center in this part of the world but that has not prevented Convention and Exhibition Managers International Corp. or Convex from aggressively pushing to put the Philippines on the world's exhibition calendar through its events.

Convex traces its roots to 1989 when Convex president Agnes Hechanova-Escalante joined her friend who did trade shows at the former Philcite compound along Roxas Boulevard.

"We were doing trade shows every months, about two to three events with different concepts. In September we had our motor show and during Christmas we had the Toys and Gifts fair," Escalante tells Business Friday.

She and her friend had a full calendar for trade shows but plans had to change in 1992 when Philcite gave way to Star City, which was conceptualized as a year-long carnival.

Their partnership continued until 1995 under BHC Inc. when her friend decided to migrate to the United States. She was left on her own and Convex was born.

It was not too much of an adjustment, she says, as she has always beeh the one in charge of organizing the events even when she was still in the partnership. It is far from an easy job, she says, as you have to pay attention to the smallest of details and you have to meet the demands of both the visitors and the exhibitors.

"If you want to be an event organizer, you have to be in the shadows but you have to provide convenience. It is hard work because you actually have three clients - the ones who produce the show like the companies or industries, associations; the participants or exhibitors and finally the visitors," Escalante explains.

She adds that the organizer must also be patient, to be competent at being the liaison between the participants and the industry and for absorbing all the complaints and concerns.

Attention to detail and the warmth in dealing with potentially difficult participants, visitors and organizers separate the good event organizers from the bad.

Days before and during the trade show or convention are marked with sleepless nights because of the concern for what could possible go wrong. As she says, Murphy's law is almost always at work during events which means that if something could go wrong, it will. She has to work hard at making sure these incidents are minimized.

"But hard work pays off when it's successful because they come back, especially for the first time clients who are usually nervous or highly-strung," she says.

This explains Convex' long association with large associations such as the Philippine Constructors Association, Philippine Institute of Architects, Philippine Institute of Interior Designers, Philippine Council of Management, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc., Association of Semiconductor and Electronics Manufacturing Engineers of the Phils., Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Association and the National Federation of Egg Producers of the Philippines.

Convex is also the lone Filipino company that has put up an international exhibit. It has been the exhibit manager of the International Federation of Asian and Western Pacific Contractors Association for the last four years.

The moving exhibit has brought Convex to put up exhibits in Bali, South Korea and Malaysia.

From just waiting for associations to come to Convex for its help in staging a convention or trade show, Convex has moved on to conceptualizing its own shows that bring together different exhibitors from different fields of specialization.

Examples are the 3rd Philippine Egg Show, which was be held from Sept. 19-21 at the Megatrade Halls, Design Build '03 to be staged at the PICC Forum, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd. from Sept. 25-28 and the TravelTour Expo 2004 also at the Megatrade Halls of SM Megamall.

"What we do is that we take a step back and because of our experience, we can see the industries as a whole. We become generalists with a specialist point of view," Escalante says.

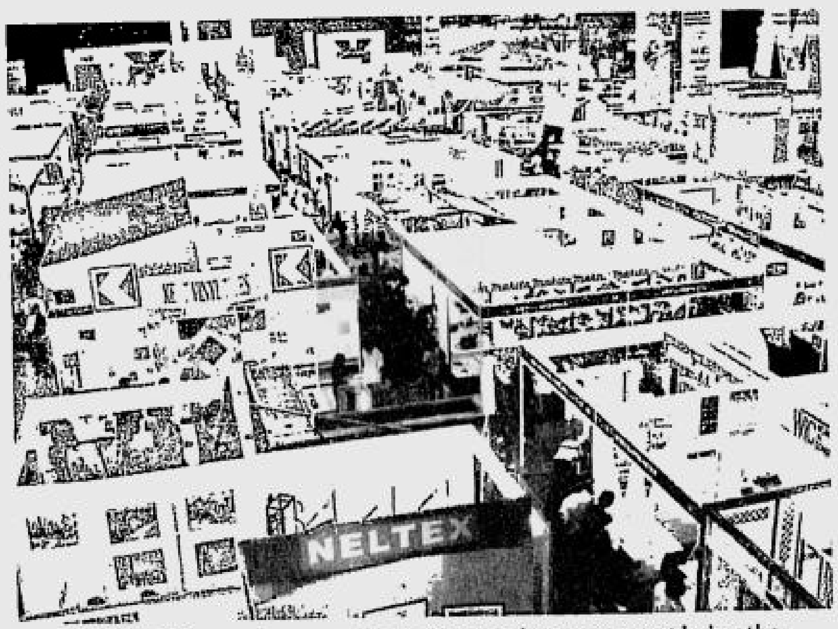
The Egg Show, for instance, attracts exhibitors from all parts of the egg industry from the egg producers to the consumers. It is on its 3rd year and continues to get bigger. The same goes for the TravelTour Expo, which is now on its 5th year.

Convex is also excited over the prospects of the DesignBuild 2003, which will be comprehensive show to be participated in by real estate developers, construction firms and interior design firms.

"Another good thing about holding these events is that we grow with the industry and it really takes at least three years before a convention or an exhibition truly becomes part of the public's calendar. You have to grow it then reap the benefits later," Escalante says.

Aside from organizing these big events, Escalante is also busy lobbying with the Department of Trade and Industry for the entry of local trade exhibitors to foreign markets.

She explains that other countries bar foreign firms from holding trade shows, unlike in the Philippines where foreign organizers can readily go in and stage events. She says it may be possible to enter foreign markets through partnerships.



CONVENTION organizers must be patient and competent at being the liaison between the participants and the industry.

Marketing to the Josés (including the José Velardes and José Pidals) - IV

MARKETING RX

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

THE QUESTION being answered in the past three weeks was about marketing to the rich.

We left our discussion last week, writing about the gross nouveau riche (GNR). In this week's column, MRx concludes this series on marketing to the rich with a discussion of the consumer behavior of the Smart Nouveau Riche (SNR)

The SNR market segment

The smart nouveau riche (SNR) stands in-between the born established rich and the GNR. A typical SNR is intelligently and more often than not sensitively conscious about his or her recently acquired upscale social status. But it is not a consciousness that breaks out into ostentatious buying and consumption behavior like the GNR. The SNR behavior has its own distinctive characteristics.

SNR's ritualistic ways

The SNR's relatively tempered social status consciousness shows in the SNR's choices of products and services to buy especially buying products with ritualistic character. For example, in deciding on the products and services for a son's wedding or a daughter's debut, the SNR parents will strictly follow a ritualized process of buying.

This process meticulously designates the products and services for use, or perhaps the more accurate words are for exhibiting, during the wedding. Just as carefully defined are how such products are to be used and how each service is to be rendered in what sequence and for whom. For a wedding, these products include the guests' wedding gifts, the wedding cake and wine, the flowers, the reception room props, and so on. The services we are talking about cover the receiving of the guests in the reception line, the ceremony at the reception hall, the dining, the toasting, the dancing and accompanying music, cake cutting, and so on and on. Professional wedding coordinators are commissioned at no small fee to assure that the steps involved in the entire process flawlessly take place.

This attention to ritualized products and services is true for other important occasions. Such other occasions include birthdays, graduation, birth of a newborn, baptism, retirement, and even death, funeral and burial. Think of all the products and services that an SNR would buy, lease, or get reconditioned for each of these events.

Because SNRs feel that they must intellectualize their buying behavior especially when it comes to buying things to meet their own needs and wants, they are more prone to practicing what author Dennis Rook in the Journal of Marketing Research (1985) calls "self-gifts."

Self-gift giving is a ritualized buying behavior that consumers with the mindset of an SNR do for at least three reasons. According to Consumer Behavior (Solomon: 1999: p.503) these three motivations can drive the buying behavior:

(1) when such consumers like rewarding themselves for having done something of a good deed;

(2) when such consumers feel that they needed to be cheered up after a disappointing experience; and

(3) when these consumers feel that they have to excite themselves into going after some target.

A favorite self-gift under any of these motivations is a Boracay or Hong Kong holiday, a P2,000 dinner for two (with a bottle of red wine) followed by a P160 movie, or an expensive cup of coffee (e.g. P170 for coffee and a brownie at StarBucks or Seattle's Best). In its tangible product form, a pet self-gift is an expensive perfume, a costly watch, a big-ticket suit or dress, and the like.

SNR's lifestyle behavior

If the GNRs' lifestyle as a consumer is marked by indulgence or over-indulgence, the SNRs' lifestyle as a consumer is often the opposite. For certain products, an SNR will often deny himself or herself from the joy of their consumption. They simply abstain. Several senior executives of a large Philippine multinational company typify this purchase abstention behavior. This Chinese-owned company followed a generous incentive-giving policy for its senior executives every year that it meets or exceeds quota. Industry sources revealed that the per capita incentive given by the owner himself at the end of the year is in the seven to eight digits. When interviewed about their consumption lifestyle, the several senior executives who had been made very rich over the past 10-20 years by the company talked about their leading "a life of self-denial" for vice and vanity products and services. These would include gourmet food, signature clothes and shoes, first class country club membership, "wine-women-and-song" entertainment houses, vacations and holidays to exotic places, and so on.

In their purchase of recurrently bought products, SNRs tend, more than any of the other SEC (socio-economic classification) segments, to stress the value in the products that they are buying. This is why they are attracted to ads and TV commercials that highlight the advertised product's functional and practical benefits. Between what is practical and what is fashionable or the latest, most SNRs would typically go for the practical. *For comments or questions, email us at MarketingRx@SaltAndLightVentures.com*

No ruling is a ruling

By Christine C. Maza
SGV & Co

TAX-FILES

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) has put its foot down on requests for BIR rulings that strain the BIR's efficient administration of tax laws.

In a recently issued Revenue Bulletin (RB) No. 1-2003, the BIR effectively thwarts the filing of unnecessary requests for BIR rulings and throws out all requests falling under what the BIR considers as "No Ruling Areas."

RB No. 1-2003 spells out the procedures and guidelines for the proper handling of requests for rulings on identified "No-Ruling Areas."

The list of No-Ruling Areas provided in RB 1-2003 may be expanded and updated by the BIR from time to time through subsequent RBs.

The Legal Service, specifically the Law Division and the International Tax Affairs Division, and the Legal Divisions in the Revenue Regions, as well as the VAT Review Committee of the BIR are tasked with issuing BIR Rulings.

The appropriate revenue official, such as the Assistant Commissioner for Legal Service, the Deputy Commissioner (Legal and Enforcement Group) and the Commissioner, then signs the rulings.

RB 1-2003 reiterates the rule that a request for Ruling should be limited to the determination of purely legal issues, as opposed to questions of fact.

It states that "[t]he Ruling Function need not be exercised where the law, rule or regulation is clear, thereby dispensing with the need for the interpretation thereof."

Under RB 1-2003, appropriate offices of the BIR are directed to reject any request for rulings in the following areas:

a. Tax treatment of the sale or disposition of principal residence under Section 24(D)(2) of the Tax Code of 1997 as implemented by Revenue Regulations 14-2000 and circularized in Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 45-2002;

b. Request for tax exemption in connection with a transfer of property pursuant to the Community Mortgage Program under Republic Act No. 7279 as implemented by Revenue Regulations No. 17-2001 and circularized in Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 43-2001;

c. VAT treatment of the sale of goods or services to a PEZA-registered enterprise pursuant to Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 74-99;

d. VAT treatment of imported articles under Section 109 of the Tax Code of 1997 pursuant to the BIR-BOC Joint Memorandum Circular No. 1-2002 and Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 48-2002;

e. Request for confirmation of tax privileges of Senior Citizens under Republic Act No. 7432;

f. Tax treatment of the monetized leave credits of government officials and employees under Executive Order No. 291;

g. Tax treatment of the monetized value of unutilized vacation leave credits not in excess of 10 days;

h. Tax treatment of separation benefits under Section 32(B)(6)(b) of the Tax Code of 1997;

i. Confirmation of tax treatment of a given benefit, regardless of amount, where such benefit is already expressly enumerated as a "de minimis" benefit under pertinent regulations particularly Revenue Regulations No. 2-98 and Revenue Regulations No. 3-98, as amended;

j. Determination of whether there is/ there is no substantial change in the ownership or enterprise (whether as a result of a merger or otherwise) for purposes of applying the Net Operating Loss Carry-over (NOLCO)provision under Section 34 (D)(3) of the Tax Code of 1997 as defined under Revenue Regulations 14-2001;

k. Determination of whether an expense is ordinary or necessary;

l. Confirmation of whether a corporation is a publicly held corporation for purposes of the Improperly Accumulated Earnings Tax under Section 29 of the Tax Code of 1997 as defined under Revenue Regulations No. 2-2001;

m. VAT treatment of export sales under Section 106 (A)(2)(a)(1) to (5) of the Tax Code of 1997 including transactions covered by Revenue Memorandum Order No. 9-2000 dated February 2, 2000;

n. VAT treatment of the sale or exchange of services covered by Section 108 (B) except those under Section 108(B)(3) and (B)(4) of the Tax Code of 1997;

o. Claim for tax refund or issuance of tax credit certificate as covered by Revenue Delegation Authority Order No. 3-2002;

p. Request for cancellation or abatement of a tax liability which should be filed with the Technical Working Committee under Revenue Regulations No. 13-2001;

q. Request for compromise settlement of any tax liability which should be filed with the National Evaluation Board or the Regional Evaluation Board as the case may be as provided under Revenue Regulations No. 7-2001;

r. Issue/s or transactions involving directly or indirectly the same taxpayer/s which is/are the subject of an investigation, on-going audit, administrative protest, claim for refund or issuance of tax credit certificate, collection proceedings, or a judicial appeal subject to Section 3 hereunder.

In this case, the taxpayer must submit and include the following statement in the request for ruling: "The issue/s or transaction subject of the request is not under investigation, on-going audit, administrative protest, claim for refund or issuance of a tax credit certificate, collection proceedings, or a judicial appeal of the taxpayer/s involved.";

s. Issues that may be determined by the Management Committee from time to time as Industry Issues, which may not or may be subject of a protest raised by a related or unrelated taxpayer;

t. Request for rulings on issue/s or transactions based on hypothetical situations;

u. Request for rulings that are not accompanied by complete documents or information as provided in Revenue Memorandum Circular Nos. 39-2001 and 14-2001, Revenue Memorandum Order Nos. 32-2001, and 1-2000 in relation to BIR Form 0901 or where the relevant regulations or issuance specify.

Notably, most issues have been settled with finality by previous rulings or court decisions, or are adequately addressed in regulations issued by the BIR, or are even clearly provided for in the Tax Code.

In the case of a pending investigation, on-going audit, claim for refund or issuance of a tax credit certificate based on the report of the processing office concerned, the RB allows a ruling to be issued with respect to issues or transactions only where the facts are not disputed as verified by the BIR Office where the request was filed.

However, prior to the issuance of the ruling, the taxpayer must submit a certification that a decision on the claim for tax refund or issuance of a tax credit has not been made or Final Assessment Notice has not been issued.

The taxpayer is required to inform the BIR Office where the request for ruling is pending if and when a decision on the said claim for refund, issuance of tax credit or Final Assessment Notice is subsequently issued.

In such an instance, the ruling BIR Office will not issue a ruling, but instead forward all documents to the proper BIR Office having jurisdiction over the case for consolidation of the docket.

BIR offices that have pending request for rulings considered as "No-Ruling Areas" are required to either advise the taxpayer in writing that the issues involved are covered by the RB 1-2003 or to endorse the request to the BIR office or committee concerned.

With a good number of pending requests for ruling already dispensed with under RB 1-2003, it is hoped that the BIR will be able to efficiently rule on more pressing tax issues.

Putting deodorants into the C-D-E's shopping list

By Anne Luisa E. Villarico

MARKETING STRATEGY

RECENT studies show that although a broad base of Filipinos live near or below the poverty line, personal hygiene products like soap, toothpaste and shampoo still rank among the most important basic household needs, next to food.

Deodorants, on the other hand, are not as high on the shopping list. The poor tend to use the cheaper alternative of alum or *tawas*.

Seeing this, Unilever Phils., makers of Rexona anti-perspirant deodorant, thought of using a more subtle approach to pitching the product. While Rexona has always been on top of the deodorant market, it is not a brand that consumers wanted to come out and be identified with.

"The stigma usually associated with using deodorants is that you have a body odor …we are trying to remove that perception and associated deodorants with good habits that you acquire," Eileen Araneta, Unilever marketing director for personal care says.

Stiff competition from direct selling and the entry of other roll-on deodorant products prompted Unilever to come up with the necessary changes for Rexona to maintain its top position in the deodorant market and keep competition at bay. Its approach is to suit the budgets of the Class D, E consumers.

"The economy may be in a slump, but there are still ways to convince the *masa* to use modern deodorants instead of *tawas* ," Araneta explains.

Last year, it changed the packaging of Rexona and launched this via a TV commercial of five good-looking males clad only in towels using Rexona. The males eventually became known as the Powerboys commercial models or P4.

The ad showed the models Rexona holding the new plastic container with curves and modern, brighter color with new fragrances.

"Rexona used to be packaged in a heavy glass bottle, the Powerboys showed the audience that you can grip it and play around the shape," she says.

UNILEVER believes that what builds the brand is innovation, so it keeps on introducing new things for the product to sell.

The introduction of the new fragrances was to "change the perception of 'amoy deodorant' scent," Araneta explains.

And then Unilever came out with the mini-sticks in consideration of its target market.

"They find the deo roll-on expensive at P30, so in an effort to bring down the cost we introduced deodorants in mini-stick," Araneta says.

Deodorants in mini-stick is considered as new in the deodorant category, she says. At P17 per stick, its introduction made an impact on consumers and Unilever claims it strengthened Rexona's position in the deodorant market.

"What builds the brand is the innovation, so we keep on introducing new things for the product to sell," she says.

The changes, she says, are essential to heighten the consumers' awareness of the Rexona line of deodorants.

The brand's newest offering is deodorant in lotion form.

"Lotion feels gentler and smoother and is milder on the underarm," Araneta says.

Each piece is available in sachets and sold at a retail price of P8.

Since using deodorants in lotion form is still unheard of for most people, Araneta says they produced TV commercials instructing the users on how to use it.

"We build the value of the product and as a follow-up, we educate the consumers," she says.

As part of promoting Rexona, Unilever went to schools, launched special events marketing and other events linked to teenagers also to make them feel more comfortable of using these products.

The effectiveness of Rexona, she says, also lies in the advertising. She gives credit to Unilever's advertising agency Lowe for its efforts and creativity in enhancing the product's image.

"The ads are what the consumer will first see. Advertising makes a simple concept grand," Araneta says.

Rexona's ad agency is Lowe. Its brand of advertising helped Unilever maintain Rexona's market leadership despite the competition.

Aside from effective advertising, Unilever also prides itself on its excellent product distribution.

"You can find our deodorant from the supermarket in the city to sari-sari stores in the rural areas," Araneta adds.

Pressure mounts for Levi's turnaround

SAN FRANCISCO—Levi's are an American icon that predate the presidency of Abraham Lincoln, and even baseball as the national pastime.

Yet Levi Strauss and Co. revenues have been falling for the last six years and pressure is mounting, analysts say, for the company to produce results or risk becoming a statistic in another American institution—bankruptcy.

Once a name synonymous with blue jeans, Levi Strauss has for some time been feeling the heat of increased competition from expensive designer-label jeans popular among the fashion-conscious, and discount brands favored by the budget-minded.

Industry analysts keeping watch on Levi Strauss say that, for all its troubles—flagging sales, mounting debt and stiff competition from newer brands—bankruptcy is not inevitable.

To avoid that fate, they say, the company with the slogan "Original for 150 Years" will have to come up with something fairly dramatic in the next few months.

"We think they are stressing, and leverage is very high," said Tom Razukas, managing director for Fitch Ratings. "We would like to see some sustainability of revenue growth and a return to more normal profit margins." And Steve Persky, who tracks Levi Strauss for Dalton Investments, said the situation is becoming increasingly pressing.

"They don't need to do it today, but over the next six to 12 months they need to get their act together," he said. "Right now, they are going in the wrong direction, burning cash and increasing debt. It has not been a good situation for quite a while."

Persky has watched the Levi Strauss saga unfold as an independent observer, but took a short position on the company's bonds last week, after it announced plans to cut 5 percent of its work force and said it was in danger of falling out of compliance with terms of its lenders.

Bond prices weaken

Levi Strauss' heavy debt load, estimated to top $2.1 billion this year, is a burden that sets it apart from many other companies that have good and bad years, but manage to stay on course over time, analysts said.

The company incurred massive debt when it went private in a leveraged buyout in 1985, and recent efforts to work that debt down have been thwarted as Levi Strauss has had to take on large costs related to job cuts and plant closings.

The company will finish this year with just under 12,000 employees, down from 17,300 at the end of 2000. Its revenues are expected to be $4.1 billion, about flat with last year, but way down from $7.1 billion in 1996, the year that a growth spurt fueled by its Dockers brand started to run out of steam.

The company has been working to pull off another fashion coup with its Superlow Jeans product, and is aggressively pushing into discount retail with the summer launch of the Signature brand in Wal-Mart Stores Inc .

"I would say we absolutely need to continue the progress we've made," said Levi Strauss spokesperson Jeff Beckman, who described the challenges ahead as more of a marathon than a sprint, and not yet urgent in nature. "We're now seeing momentum starting to build." *Reuters*

Banking On Its Roots

While Chinatrust continues to surprise the local banking community with its innovative product creations and impressive financial performance, those in the know are also certain that the Bank is enjoying a stronghold on the Taiwanese segment. Pao Chuan Lin is Chinatrust's Vice-President for Taiwan Division, and he explains why the Taiwanese business remains a strong and viable niche in the country. B.C. Lin, as he is fondly called by colleagues, majored in Industrial Engineering at the National Taipei Institute of Technology and also holds a Masteral Degree in Industrial Management from the National Taiwan Institute of Technology. B.C. has over thirteen years experience in Corporate Banking.

As a crucial market for Chinatrust, how do you see Taiwan's recovery in the next few years?

I should say that we're looking at a re-emergence of Taiwan as an economic power in East Asia in the next few years.

Last year, the economy steadily recovered with its gross domestic product (GDP) growing 3.5% after experiencing a negative 2.2% growth in 2001, its worst recession in three decades. Taiwan's recovery was largely due to the growth of exports and industrial production, particularly in the electronics and IT sectors.

This year, we had seen the resiliency of the Taiwanese economy as it triumphantly battled the adverse impact of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak on its tourism sector. While the global uncertainty created by the war in Iraq dampened domestic demand, financial stimulus provided by Taiwanese authorities may trigger a pick up in private investments and consumption. Taiwan also stands to benefit from tremendous growth in China, its biggest export market through Hong Kong.

What will be the biggest growth contributors to the Taiwanese economy?

Of course, a buoyant export sector will continue to drive the Taiwanese economy. Aside from electronics and IT products, Taiwan will continue to be a main source of garments, toys, and footwear for its export markets.

Aside from China and Hong Kong, Taiwan also has strong trade relations with the United States, Germany, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Netherlands, and the Philippines.

How would you characterize the Taiwanese businessman based on your dealings with them?

VP B.C. Lin

Taiwanese businessmen are a very conservative group of investors. Like many foreign investors, Taiwanese do their homework assiduously to ensure that they recoup their investments. They would only give their trust to companies with exemplary track record. I think this is one of the reasons why they are successful in business.

It is not easy to get Taiwanese clients to bank with us. Trust should absolutely be there through constant nurturing. And that's what we do; we put in a lot of personal touch and sincere understanding of their needs.

We remain solidly committed to serving the Taiwanese community in the Philippines because it is part of our strategic positioning as the global Chinese bank.

Creating Campaigns That Work

Chinatrust FVP for Marketing Gerry V. Munda, the person behind the Bank's major product and institutional promotions, talks about marketing campaigns that work. A graduate of Economics at the University of Western Ontario in Canada with a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Loyola Marymount University in California, Gerry also heads the cash management group of the Bank.

How do you know if you have a winning brand?

FVP Gerry V. Munda

I had known that I was on to building a potentially strong brand when early this year, Chinatrust received a nomination from the prestigious, international publication SuperBrands, to participate as an honored institution in its 3rd Philippine edition, supposedly due for publication by the first quarter of 2004.

Apparently, an independent council composed of the most eminent media and communications executives in the country, including the academe, selects about 100 of the strongest brands in the Philippines. They cite market dominance, goodwill, customer loyalty, longevity, and overall market acceptance as criteria for selection.

How do you create marketing campaigns that will ultimately lead to higher sales?

A foolproof lesson in developing campaigns that work is ensuring your message is single in everything: thought, mind and product. A single-minded message is stronger in customer recall, than a beautiful advertisement selling three various concepts.

Marketing, as a discipline, does not gift practitioners like myself a clear-cut formula that is sure to increase sales or solicit my desired market response for product initiatives we pursue.

What it provides me are tools I can use together, or independently, that help our sales channels move products and reach targets. It sharpens my awareness of creative partnerships that can be pursued, strategic alliances that can be forged, innovative ways of packaging and pricing a product, and new communication tools I can exploit.

Nothing, however, can replace constant, clear and truthful messages communicated to your customer, through creative and cost-effective avenues. While the winning synergy of these tools may differ from one institution to another, constant customer communication is still the most inexpensive marketing tool you can use to keep your customers informed, reminded, and apprised of important developments.

How do we know what the market needs and wants?

Our learnings on customer behavior tell us that the target market is more sophisticated today than they have ever been in the last twenty years. The continuous influx of better options offered by competition, the price war in most goods and services, and the unstoppable evolution of technology, define whether a campaign strategy will succeed or not. Lots of factors come into play.

However, at the farthest end of a consumer's decision-making process, he will look for one and only one thing – value.

What would be of "value" to customers then?

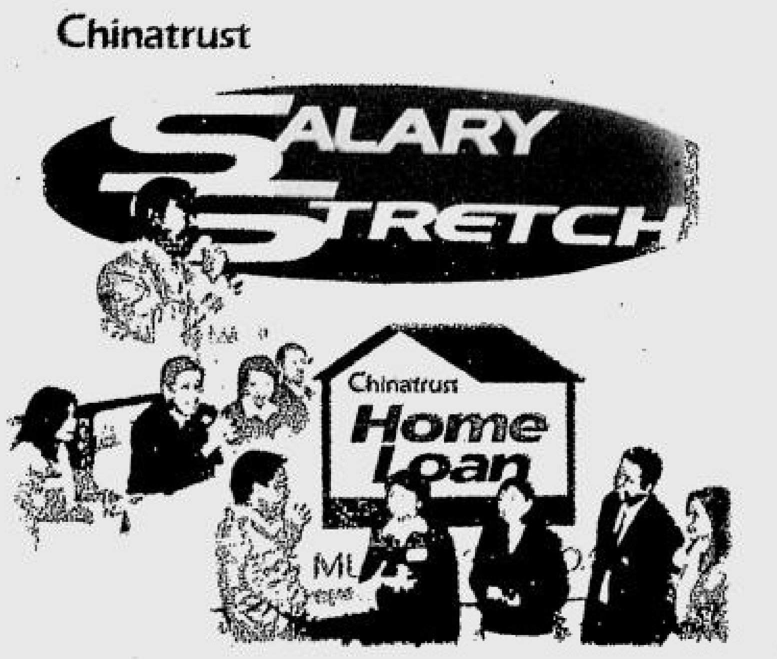
Value is the real, quantifiable benefit the customer will derive from an offer. And this value must not come with strings, or future commitments he must make. It must be simply his for the taking. It actually helps that consumers today have more defined needs. Therefore the most fortunate of campaigns are those that answer these needs, and answer them now.

The customer simply will do what human nature will dictate : patronize the offer with the best value – value that can be derived today, tomorrow, and long after he has fully consumed the product. No matter how complex customer behavior can get, we know today that it will only respond to a truthful offer with the best value, a clear benefit to satisfy an existing need.

How do you build what they call "super brands"?

At Chinatrust, the marketing team has been blessed with successful campaigns so far. But while everyone in the Bank is still relishing the good fruits of sustained financial performance, I am quite aware that this is simply the beginning of the long and arduous process of brand building.

We have just begun. The challenge today is to be able to sustain what we have accomplished so far, and aim to outdo ourselves in our own yardsticks of performance – product innovation and service quality.



Building the Middle Market Franchise

Martin T. Lee, senior vice president for institutional banking, shares his views on how Chinatrust broke new grounds by redirecting its marketing efforts towards the middle market segment. Martin has built his 25-year institutional banking career managing corporate portfolios of various universal and commercial banks.

Who would you consider belonging to the middle market sector?

The "middle market" is made up of companies with annual sales volume of P400 million to P1.2 billion. They are among the 1,001st to 3,000th biggest corporations in the country. Their financial records are normally informal and thus, personal relationship or closeness is extremely necessary for one to extract and assess their true financial strength or weakness.

Why focus on the middle market segment which appears to be a more risky proposition?

While we continue to maintain relationships with top tier corporate accounts, we believe that opportunities in this market segment are getting thinner, given the stiff competition among the banks especially with the entry of various foreign banks that cater primarily to this market.

On the other hand, the middle market continues to contribute heftily to the bottom line of banks. While the credit risk may be relatively higher than the top tier accounts, it is very manageable, as long as one is extremely familiar with the peculiarities of this sector.

What are the peculiarities of this sector?

The middle market sector values personal relationship and excellent service quality. The usual contact persons in the sector are the owners themselves or the entrepreneur while for most top tier accounts, you usually deal with "hired" professionals. Thus, the decision process is fast and in most cases, instantaneous, since you are dealing with the owners themselves who naturally have the final say.

That's why in handling middle market accounts, there is a need for a personal kind of service. It is for this service that most middle market clients stay loyal and dedicated customers. In most times, they tend to grow with you, as in the long run, they become top tier accounts in terms of size. Hence, they provide the bank a strong revenue base as the relationship expands.

How do you mitigate risks from this sector?

SVP Martin T. Lee

Due to the relatively higher credit risk, banks should customize the credit approval process to address this sector, allowing flexibility but without compromising quality. Bankers operating in this market should possess extensive experience in servicing these clients.

Experience, after all, is the best teacher. It is over time and after meaningful decisions that expertise is built. Because in this niche, strategies are developed based on everyday learnings.

What's important is having foot soldiers who are in touch with today's rapidly changing market needs. Research, market understanding, an "out-of-box-approach" and foresight, are tools you can never do without.

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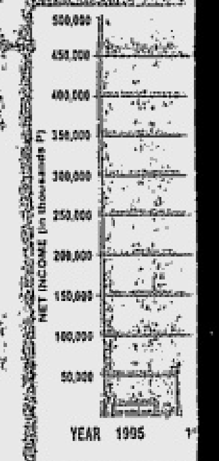

From left : CHINATRUST
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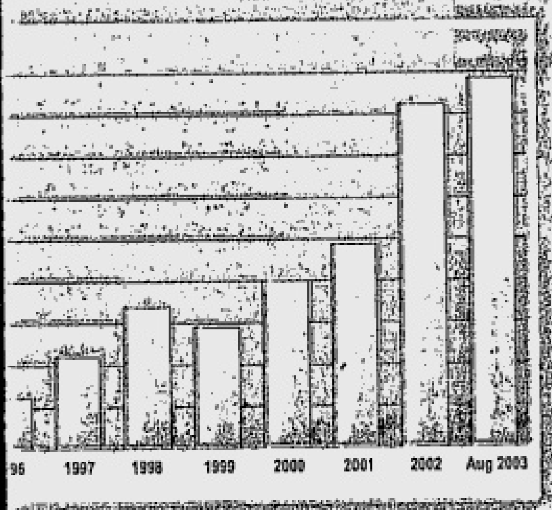

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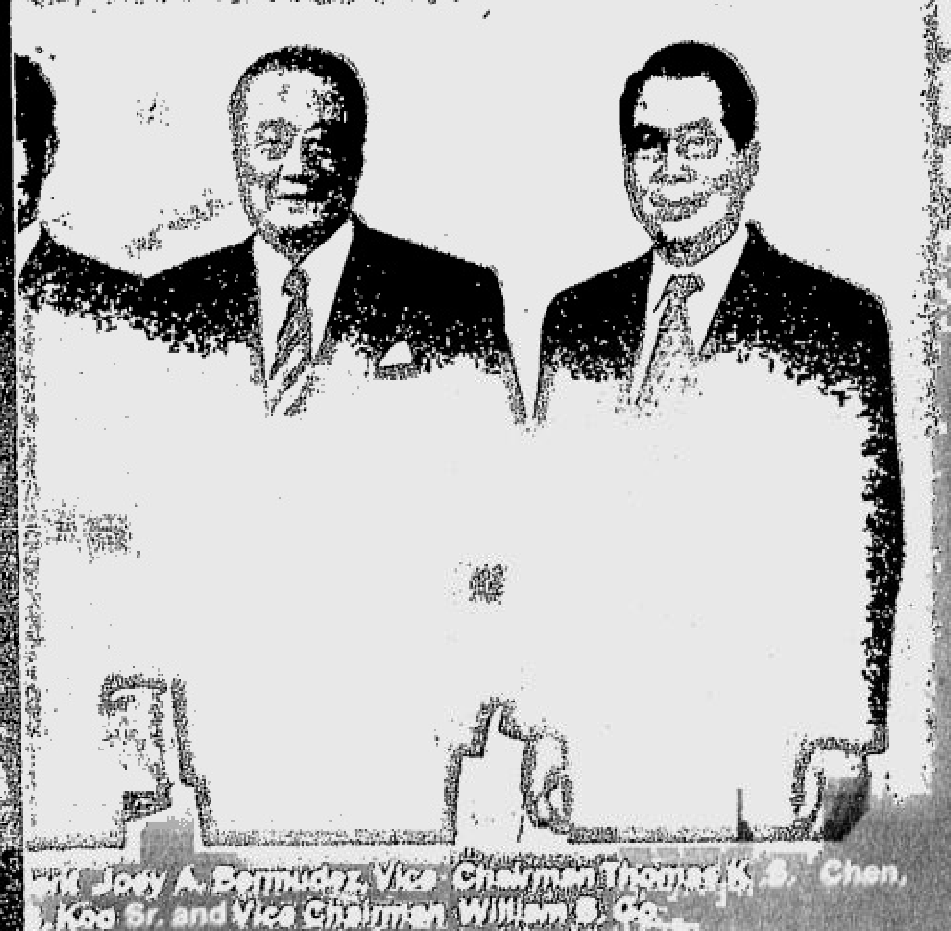


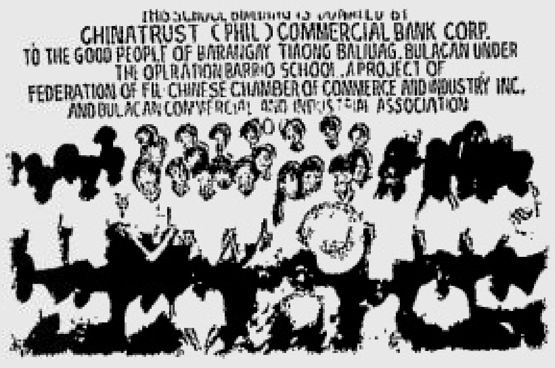
Joey A. Bermudez, Vice Chairman Thomas K.S. Chen,
Koo Sr. and Vice Chairman William S. Go.

Real lives. Real Benefits.

Tiaong Elementary School

TIAONG Elementary School in Baliuag, Bulacan is no different from other public schools across the country. Around 60 Grade 5 students are cramped inside a tiny classroom everyday, kept cool only by a worn out electric fan hanging on the wall.

The acceptable student to classroom ratio to make teaching and learning possible is said to be 35:1. But for most public schools in the country, the population of students per classroom is placed at an average 70 students per classroom.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Recognizing this problem, Chinatrust (Philippines) Commercial Bank Corporation responded to the call of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII) for the construction of classrooms in public schools.

One beneficiary was Tiaong Elementary School. Last September 11, a newly-built two-classroom building was turned over to the school's administration. The bigger classrooms will house the Grade 5 and Grade 6 students of the school.

Natividad Ocampo, head teacher of the school, expressed gratitude to Chinatrust and its vice chairman William Go for the donation which will make learning easier for their Grade 5 and Grade 6 students.

Asked what will happen to their old classroom, a Grade 6 student, said in an interview that it will be converted into the school's canteen. The current canteen is a makeshift shed smaller than the size of a comfort room.

"It's really not much but we hope that in our own little way, we are able to help the students and teachers achieve a better learning environment," said Chinatrust president Joey Bermudez.

Indeed, the classroom problem is just one of the worries of Tiaong Elementary School.

Mrs. Elvira Sangalang, a teacher for Grade 3 students, said that about 10 children have to share a book in every subject. Not everyone can afford to go to school in shoes nor come in complete uniform. Half of the students can not even buy the required set of eight notebooks for the lectures and had to recycle old notebooks of their elder siblings.

The school has four computer units but only 30 students now get hands-on training from them. The reason? A student has to pay P50 a month to get computer training. This is for the computer trainor and the electricity cost for running the computers, says Mrs. Sangalang.

"This is really, just the start of our long-term partnership with the school. We hope that we can provide more assistance to them in the future," says Bermudez.

On the day of the turnover of the school building, Chinatrust executives led by Bermudez and Chinatrust Vice Chairmen Thomas Chen and William Go distributed school bags with F4 notebooks and pencils inside to nearly 400 students.

As a token of their appreciation, Grade 6 students prepared a folk dance number for their honored guests which also included FFCCCII officers led by its Vice President Henry Ah, Department of Education officials, and local officials led by Rep. Wilfredo Villarama.

Manuel Roxas High School Cooperative

PUBLIC school teachers at the Manuel Roxas High School (MRHS) decided to put up a cooperative in 1997 as the country plunged into a deep economic crisis amid the Asian regional turmoil. Its purpose is fairly simple: lend money to members who need it and provide assistance to students through food allowances or other subsidies.

MRHS TEACHERS EMPLOYEES CONSUMERS COOPERATIVE

Today, 197 out of the 300 teachers in the school, or roughly two thirds, are members of the cooperative. All are lined up for loans. And the association's funds are simply not enough to meet all of their requirements.

Thus, the teachers considered it a blessing when Chinatrust (Philippines) Commercial Bank Corporation offered them a lending hand.

"We couldn't believe it at first, after all the paperwork and discussion, we finally got a call from Chinatrust asking us to come to their office to sign the contract. So we went there and signed. We even got free pens and umbrellas, " said MRHS Cooperative Chairman Movita Araza.

Some of the borrowers used their loans to start a small venture, like Cashier Marinelia Figueroa who borrowed P30,000 to start a carinderia.

"My sister already had this small eatery but she could only serve breakfast because she didn't have sufficient capital. When the coop's lending capacity increased because of the Chinatrust loan, I borrowed enough to give my sister additional capital to rent her own space. At the end of the month, after paying the rent and paying the coop, we share what's left which is still a big help," said Mrs. Figueroa.

Most borrowers, however, still loan for personal reasons such as unexpected expenses that the salary cannot cover. Teacher Charito Olave-Galino met her husband in the school. They prepared for their wedding for almost half a year but the expenses still daunted them.

"We thought we had enough but in the end we were still short by P20,000. We applied for a loan from the coop. If not for the Chinatrust loan, we might not have been able to borrow that much at fairly easy terms," related Mrs. Galino.

Chinatrust first vice president Josie Natividad said the teachers are actually better borrowers than some big corporations. "The teachers take their loan payments very seriously. I think there's very good reason why public school teachers are tasked to count ballots during elections. They are really honest and committed to their obligations."

Kooperatiba ng mga Guro sa Arellano

ARELLANO High School founded its cooperative, Kooperatiba ng mga Guro sa Arellano (KGA), around the same time as Manuel Roxas High School. For six years now, KGA had been operating the canteen of the school.

Another big break came when a private school with a large population put up a bid for the operation of its canteen. Headed by its Chairman Mrs. Eunice Abanto, KGA was able to land exclusive rights to operate the canteen of the Paco Catholic School in Manila and feed its 7,000 students.

"When we won the bid for the management and operation of Paco Catholic School canteen, we had to put up a corporation to manage the canteen," shared Mrs. Abanto. Several members of the coop invested in the corporation called JED which stands for the first letters of the names of the founding partners.

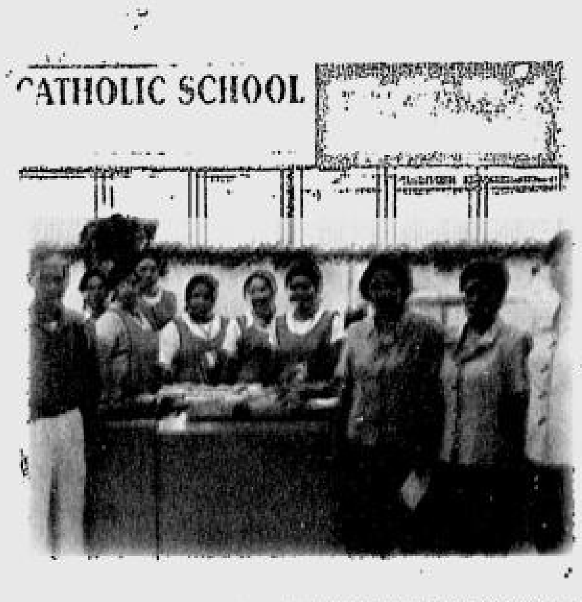
The loan agreement with Chinatrust allowed JED to expand its operations and increase the lending to members. Among the first borrowers was Mr. Cesar Sajise who was planning for his retirement.

"The loan from Chinatrust made it possible for me to make some investments. I was due for retirement and I needed to think of my future income," Mr. Sajise said. "I saw that there was potential in the bananacue business given the proper location and capital. Thanks to Chinatrust and the coop, I was given both. I invested half of my loan into JED, and half into a stall in the canteen which is run by my son. Now I can enjoy my retirement knowing I have additional income."

Mrs. Abanta said the coop and its operations are run very carefully by its board. Applying for membership is akin to getting a loan from a bank.

"We evaluate the paying capacity of each applicant and we interview him or her extensively. We also value our reputation as a borrower and we hope the trust Chinatrust placed on us grows in the future," added Mrs. Abanta.

"What we're actually doing is to give a little back to the public school teachers who have done so much for our society. It's still banking, but with very special rates because we're helping the teachers help themselves," said Chinatrust's Josie Natividad.



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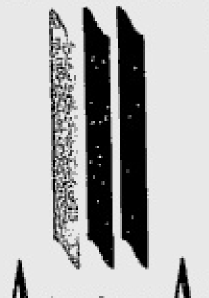

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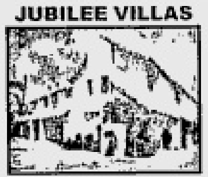

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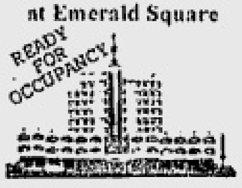

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2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

SALARY & BUSS 524-3197

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WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8990215

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1.5% Fast Car Loan 6557605

1HR FastCarLoan 7125202

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

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Apply personally and bring your transcript of records for interview on September 30, 2003, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM.

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT-ILOCOS
City of San Fernando, La Union
Tel. Nos. 242-5981, 242-7035 & 242-5315
E-mail address: dohreg1@lu.csl.com.ph
Fax No. 888-4326

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Center for Health for Health Development - Ilocos (DOH Region I), hereby invites interested suppliers to pre-qualify and to bid for:

SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENTS AND SUPPLIES

Total Amount : P4,422,697.00
Fund Source : GOP

Interested parties may secure their pre-qualification and bid forms at the office of the Regional Bids and Awards (RBAC) Chairman/Secretariat, CHD-I Office, Parian, City of San Fernando La Union, between **September 26** to **October 10, 2003** after payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 500.00.

Pre-bid Conference is set on **October 6, 2003** at the CHD-I Conference Hall.

The CHD-I RBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect therein, or accept proposals as may be deemed advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO C. JANAIRO, MD., MPH
Director IV

(PDI - Sept. 26 & 27, 2003)

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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DIRECT HIRE MKTG PERSONNEL 20-45 COLL GRAD/LEVEL W/ W/O EXP 4370454 MS SHIE

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Mktg Staf 09192535623 GLENDA

Wanted LICENSED DENTIST with 5year contract submit Biodata with picture Unit 15 Body Senses Wing Robinsons Galleria Edsa Ortigas Quezon City Tel. no. 635-7883 / 632-7174

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRAINING 5271590

AUCTION SALE

MUNOZ BRIONES PAWNSHOP
AUCTION SALE
• Oct. 6, 2003 •
All unredeemed articles from May 1-31, 2003
•354 Roosevelt Ave QC 9AM.
•Pinatubo St. Mand City 10AM
•Libertad St corner Sierra Madre Mand. 11AM.
•109 Dela Rosa St Mktl 1PM.
V. ZAMORA Lic Auctioneer

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late CARLITO EDORA who died on August 13, 2002 in Masinloc, Zambales has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs on December 27, 2002 under Doc. 150, Page 31, Book III, Series of 2002 by Notary Public for Makati City, Alden Francis C. Gonzales.
(PDI-Sept. 12, 19 & 26, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MARIO VILLACORTA who died on July 6, 2002 at Makati City has been extrajudicially settled on September 24, 2003 at Makati City before Christopher Edward R. Avelino, a Notary Public for and in Makati City per Doc. No. 296, Page 60, Book No. 1, Series of 2003 (PDI-Sept.26,Oct.3&10,2003)

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LAURO O. RODRIGUEZ

Peacefully joined his Creator on September 22, 2003 at the age of 75.

His loving wife **BELEN**; children & spouses Lorna & Johnny, Bu & Marissa, Dan & Mady (†); grandchildren Enzo & Nikki, Kristel, Mia, Anna, Jr., Jessica, Janina; siblings & spouses Jesus (†) & Loring, Pepe & Fanny, Perla & Paquito (†), Tony & Zeny, Luz, Juling & Artemio, Roger & Let, Angel & Star, Luloy & Lulu and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Multi Purpose Hall Ilang-Ilang St. cor. Jasmin St., Mapayapa Village 2, Brgy. Holy Spirit, Capitol District, Quezon City.

Interment will be on September 28, 2003 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

"...absent
with
the body
to be
present
with
the
Lord."

2 Corinthians 5:8

"We will greatly miss you daddy
and your sweet, gentle ways
of showing us your love"

MANUEL WILWAYCO PEREZ

Abagon, Gerona, Tarlac

Born April 26, 1930 - Died September 21, 2003

His bereaved wife **Teresita Pascual Perez**; and loving children **Marilyn, Maridol** and **Dana Bey, Manuel Perez Jr.** and **Grace, Maribeth** and **Rolando Salandanan, Meynardo, Marinette** and **Elias Paras, Mariel, Maricar** and **Wilfredo Desiderio**; brother **Antonio Perez**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at the family residence, Brgy. Abagon, Gerona, Tarlac.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 27, 2003 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Gerona Cemetery.

"Eternal life will swallow up that
which can die. God made us for
this very reason and He has given
us the Spirit as a guarantee
that we will live again."
2 Cor 5:4-5

Our Love for Ateng
will never die.

DEMETRIA LEGASPI PENSON

of Talavera, Nueva Ecija
August 14, 1915 - September 25, 2003

She is survived by her loving sisters **Gloria P. Manalaysay** and **Engracia P. Ramos**; brother-in-law, **Alberto J. Manalaysay**; nephews and nieces **Citos, Min, Digie, Cris, Judith, Leny, Karin, Carlito, Lorna, Eric, Marissa**; grandchildren **Jay, Michelle, Jon-Jon, Anna, Kathy, Geline, Carmina, Ritchie, Ted, Krizia, Victoria, Rose** and great grandson **CJ**.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, EDSA.

Masses are scheduled at 8:00 p.m. on September 25, 26 & 27, 2003.

Dra. FELICIDAD C. LORENZO

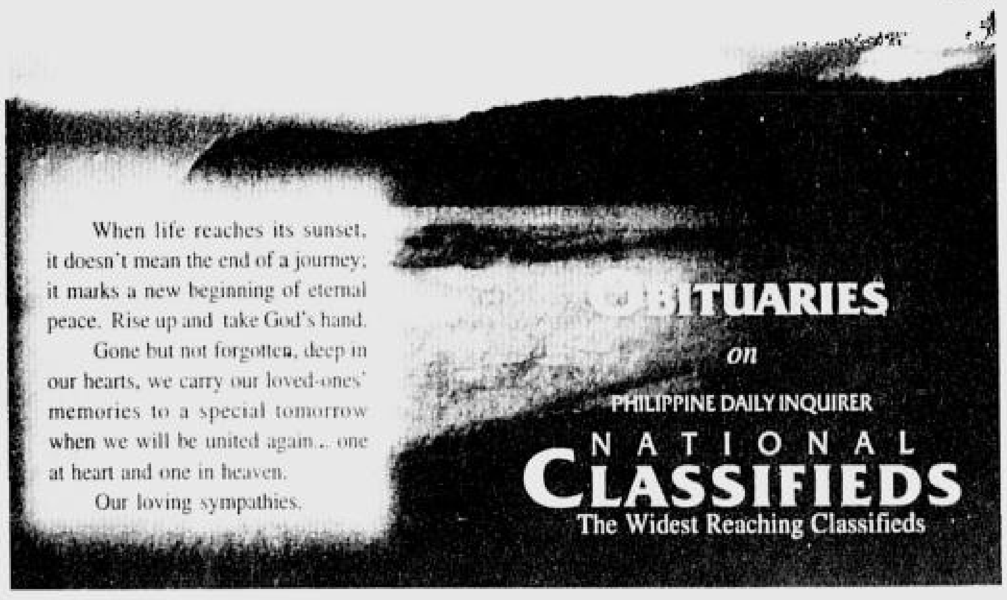
Born: February 6, 1909 - Died: September 24, 2003
Retired College Secretary and faculty member
of the College of Dentistry, University of the East

Daughter of former Fire Chief Jacinto Lorenzo †
and Maria Celso Lorenzo †
and sister of Esperanza † and Adelaida Lorenzo †

Her remains are at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel 2, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be at Manila North Cemetery, on Saturday, September 27, 2003, after the 8:30 A.M. Mass at the Chapel.

Her nephews, nieces, grand nephews and grand nieces and other relatives request your prayers.



When life reaches its sunset, it doesn't mean the end of a journey; it marks a new beginning of eternal peace. Rise up and take God's hand.

Gone but not forgotten, deep in our hearts, we carry our loved-ones' memories to a special tomorrow when we will be united again... one at heart and one in heaven.

Our loving sympathies.

OBITUARIES
on
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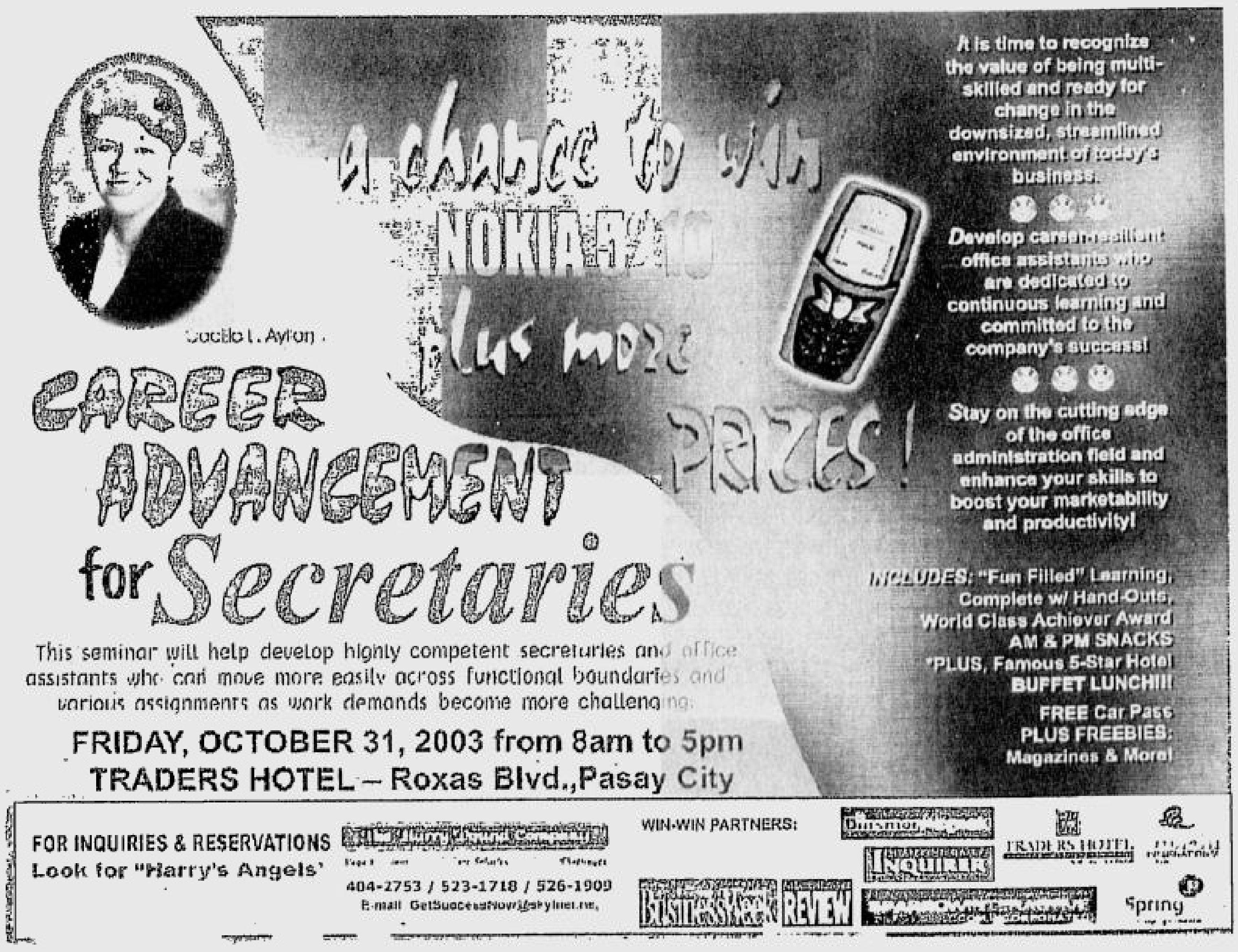

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G/F MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-3366, 920-5521 loc. 3600, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO BID (E-Bid)

The Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (MWSI) is inviting all interested bidders to participate in the **Electronic Bidding for the supply and delivery of Brass Fittings**, as shown below:

No.	Qty.	Item/Description
1	10,000 pcs.	Brass Valve Angle anti-theft 15mm valve size with provision for locking 20mm x 20mm FTE inlet x swivel nut outlet thread ISO 7
2	12,000 pcs.	Brass Ball Valve 15mm valve size with provision for locking 20mm FTE inlet thread size x 20mm swivel nut outlet thread ISO 7
3.	23,600 pcs.	Brass Union Coupling Adaptor 25mm CJ x CJ for PE

AS PER MWSI TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION
Section 32009 Rev. No./Date: 00/18 September 01

Interested supplier/manufacturers are required to submit the pre-qualification requirements enumerated in the Terms and Conditions, on or before **October 3, 2003, 4:00 p.m.** at the Purchasing Department.

The complete bid documents can be secured at the Purchasing Department, Basement, Eng'g. Building, MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of One Thousand Pesos Only (P1,000.00) in the form of cash or Manager's Check payable to Maynilad Water Services, Inc.

E-Bid schedule will be on October 21, 2003 (Tuesday), 3:00 p.m.

MWSI finally reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any and all informalities therein, and accept the bid it deems most advantageous to the company.

(Sgd.) **IGNACIO B. GIMENEZ**
SAVP, Corporate Logistics

(PDI - Sept 26 & 27 2003)

AT&T Wireless launches int'l text messaging service in RP

AT&T Wireless launches a new service by enabling international text messaging service to the Philippines to help Filipinos in the United States stay connected with their loved ones.

According to the top Philippine text carrier Globe Telecom, Filipinos exchange 100 million text messages daily. As the text-messaging craze continues to build around the world, AT&T Wireless today extends inter-carrier text messaging capabilities to the Philippines, believed to be the most active text messaging country in the world.

"AT&T Wireless continues to break through barriers to make text messaging an easy, inexpensive means of communication for people around the globe," said John Bunyan, senior vice president, AT&T Wireless mobile multimedia services. "Today we're bringing this service to the text-messaging-savvy Filipino community here and abroad-so friends and family can stay just a text message away."

GSM/GPRS users in the Philippines can text their loved ones in the United States through AT&T Wireless' international text messaging capability, which is available to all customers with compatible handsets. Since AT&T Wireless' next generation network operates on the global standard GSM/GPRS, these customers can also enjoy international roaming text messaging capabilities while in the Philippines.

In addition, AT&T Wireless' next generation GSM/GPRS customers can roam on various networks while visiting the Philippines and can also use their phones to send and receive messages to and from users in the United States and other countries.

AT&T Wireless customers in the United States can send text messages to other users in the Philippines for $0.25, and to users in the United States for $0.10. Unlike with most other carriers, AT&T Wireless customers only pay for text messages that they send. Customers can receive an unlimited number of text messages at no charge.

To send an international text message, GSM/GPRS users simply type the + symbol, dial the country Code (1), the area code, and then the 7-digit wireless number.

By expanding text-messaging capabilities internationally to the Philippines, AT&T Wireless again demonstrates its leadership in text messaging innovation and reliability in the United States. AT&T Wireless was among the first of the national carriers to offer text messaging in the United States beginning October 2000. In November 2001, AT&T Wireless became the first national carrier to allow its customers to send text messages to virtually any wireless phone-regardless of the carrier-simply by knowing the recipient's phone number. Last July, AT&T Wireless became the first carrier to introduce color picture messaging in the United States. In February 2003, the company introduced multimedia messaging service (MMS) to the United States, allowing customers to combine color pictures, animations, text and sound that can be sent to and from wireless phones.

For additional information about the text messaging, visit www.attwireless.com/text>.

GTBC BINONDO OPENS AMIDST FESTIVAL

One of the biggest celebrations in the Chinese calendar, the Mid-Autumn Festival, served as the fitting backdrop to the grand opening of the new Globe Telecom Business Center (GTBC) in Binondo. A dragon dance kicked off the event as the ceremony began at the foot of Jones Bridge and led up to the store, located at the ground floor of the Enrique Yuchengco Building along Quintin Paredes Street. Globe Platinum subscribers from the Chinese community were in attendance, as well as Globe Telecom's phone partners from Nokia, Samsung, Siemens and Sony Ericsson. As a welcome treat to customers, GTBC Binondo is holding the Lucky Golden Number raffle promo for a chance to win the prepaid Handyphone number 7107777. The Chinese believe the number 7 brings prosperity and longevity. Every G-Plan subscription or qualified purchase at GTBC Binondo until Sept. 27 qualifies the subscriber to a raffle entry. Shown at the opening, from left, are Andrew Limjoco and Baby Revilla of Siemens, Gracielou Khoe, Globe Telecom regional head-business centers, Councilor Miles Roces, 3rd District of Manila, Paul So, former head, Chinese Development Authority.

PUBLIC RELATIONS
ABS·C

ABS-CBN SPONSORS 11TH PR CONGRESS

The Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) tapped ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. as media sponsor for the 11th National Public Relations Congress ongoing until Sept. 26 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. With the theme 'Building Relationships for a Better World', the event brings together PR professionals, experts and advocates representing various industries and sectors in exploring revolutionary possibilities in the practice of public relations. Shown during the sponsorship agreement signing are (seated left) PRSP Congress chair and Globe Telecom public relations head Jones Campos, APR and ABS-CBN PR director Leah Salterio. Looking on are, standing left, PRSP secretary Carmencita Arce and PRSP adviser Evelyn del Rosario, APR of PLDT.

National Power Corporation

September 24, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Power Corporation (NPC) of the Republic of the Philippines invites all registered Steam Coal Suppliers/Producers, foreign and local, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the prompt supply and delivery of 5 x 65,000 Mt +/- 7% Imported Steaming Coal for Sual Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant for CY 2003 (Batch 5).

The complete sets of eligibility requirements/bidding documents are available for issuance at the Office of the Bids and Contract Services Department (BCSD), NPC-OBC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 924-5361/922-1622, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00).

Registered prospective bidders shall be evaluated as to eligibility based on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria prescribed in the eligibility requirements/tender documents.

The requirements are tabulated hereunder:

CY 2003 (Batch 5)

OPEN TENDER

Schedule	Plant	Vol. (MT)	Approved Budget for The Contract (ABC)*	Pre-bid Conference	Submission of Eligibility Docs/Bids (E-bidding)
SCF-G2.5.02.1	SCFTPP	5 x 65,000	US $12,350,000.00	Oct. 6, 2003 2:00 PM Sinulog Rm. Solarium	Oct. 17, 2003 10:00 AM Kanao Rm. Solarium

** - Load Tolerance not included*

***Delivery Period:** November to December 2003*

The Contracts Award Committee (CAC), NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids, at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s).

Any inquiry regarding the above invitation shall be addressed to the undersigned.

(Sgd.) **SILVANO C. ZANORIA**
SVP, ME & TMS and
Chairman, Contracts Award Committee

(PDI - Sept. 26, 2003)

ORDINANCE NO. ______

AN ORDINANCE CONFERRING DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD TO BARANGAY OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BEEN ELECTED FOR THREE (3) CONSECUTIVE TERMS SINCE THE PASSAGE OF R.A. 7160 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE OF 1991.

Be it ordained by the City Council of Manila, THAT:

SECTION 1. The conferment of the DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD, hereinafter referred to as the Award to Barangay Officials who have been elected for three (3) consecutive terms, since the passage of R.A. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, is hereby authorized.

SEC. 2. For purposes of clarity, the following elected officials shall be entitled to the AWARD.

a. Punong Barangay; and
b. Barangay Kagawad

PROVIDED, That said officials have not been declared guilty of any administrative or criminal offense at any time during their term of office.

SEC. 3. The award shall consist of a plaque of appreciation and cash rewards.

SEC. 4. For the purpose of computation of Cash Award and Gratuity Pay, Barangay Chairmen and Sanggunian Kagawads elected for three (3) consecutive terms but failed to finish their term of office shall; except as penalty in administrative or criminal case, be entitled to the AWARD up to the official's last day of service.

SEC. 5. The AWARD shall be bestowed by the City Mayor to the recipients at an appropriate ceremony to be held for the purpose.

SEC. 6. The amount of TWENTY FIVE MILLION PESOS (Php25,000,000.00), or so much thereof, as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any unappropriated funds existing in the City Treasury, to be made available for purposes of gratuity or monetary rewards provided for hereof.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity Clause* – This Ordinance shall take effect upon its approval.

Enacted by the City Council of Manila at its regular session today.

Approved by His Honor, the Mayor, on

APPROVED:

JOSE L. ATIENZA, JR.
Mayor
City of Manila

DANILO B. LACUNA
Vice-Mayor and Presiding Officer
City Council, Manila

ATTESTED:

EMMANUEL R. SISON
Secretary to the Mayor

RODOLFO F. LAPID
Secretary to the City Council

PRINCIPAL AUTHORS: HON. MARLON M. LACSON, Majority Floor Leader HON. AMALIA A. TOLENTINO Hon. Edward V.P. Maceda, Hon. Julio E. Logarta, Jr., Hon. Ruben F. Buenaventura, Hon. Edward M. Tan, Hon. Danilo T. Varona, Hon. Pacifico D. Laxa, Hon. Jhosep Y. Lopez, Hon. Ma. Asuncion G. Fugoso, Hon. Cita Astals, Hon. Juan Miguel T. Cuna, Hon. Ricardo S. Isip, Hon. Victoriano A. Melendez, Hon. Benjamin D. Asilo, Hon. Nelissa F. Beltran, Hon. Ma. Theresa B. Bonoan-David, Hon. Richard C. Ibay, Hon. Martin V.I. Isidro, Jr., Hon. Patrick S. Ocampo, Hon. Casimiro C. Sison, Hon. Roberto R. Omega, Jr. and HON. JOCELYN B. DAWIS-ASUNCION, Acting Presiding Officer.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the City Council ordered the publication of the above proposed Ordinance during its regular session held on September 18, 2003, pursuant to the provisions of Section 17, Article III of R.A. 409, as amended; otherwise known as the Revised Charter of the City of Manila.

(Sgd.) RODOLFO F. LAPID
City Government Dept. Head III
(Secretary to the City Council)

(PDI-Sept 26, 2003)

TESDA
Technical
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and Skills
Development
Authority

Republic of the Philippines
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TESDA)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility to bid for the **OPA OPERATION** requirement located at TESDA Compound, East Service Road, South Superhighway, Taguig, Metro Manila.

The following eligibility requirements in two copies duly certified must be submitted to the Procurement and Supply Division at 3rd Floor, Administration Building, TESDA Complex, East Service Road, Taguig, Metro Manila, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:

1. SEC/DTI Registration papers
2. 2003 Business License/Permit
3. Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2001 & 2002) with accompanying Audited Financial Statements marked **"RECEIVED"** by the BIR
4. Company Profile
5. List of clients (past and present) with corresponding contact cost, references and supporting documents.
6. Statement of the company that it is not **"BLACKLISTED"** or bared from bidding by any government agency, offices or corporations

The above requirements must be completely submitted in two (2) separate folders with **Table of Contents** and **properly tabbed.** Otherwise, the same will not be accepted by the PSD.

NOTE : *Only Eligible Bidder will be issued the Bid Documents and allowed to participate in the Bidding.*

Deadline for submission: **October 6, 2003**

A pre-bid conference with eligible bidders will be held on **October 24, 2003, 2:00 p.m.** at the Conference Room, Office of the Regional Director, Region IV-A, during which all clarifications related to the bidding shall be discussed. Bidders representative are invited to participate in the said conference.

Bidding documents may be obtained by eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Philippine pesos 500.00 to the TESDA cashier with office at 3rd Floor, TESDA Administration Building after the pre-bid conference.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, cashier's or manager's check of not less than **2.5%** of the total bid price and must be delivered at the Agoncillo Hall, TESDA Women Center (TWC) on or before **2:00 p.m.** of **November 18, 2003.** Late bids will not be accepted.

TESDA reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informality in the bids received or to accept such bids which may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **SANTIAGO A. YABUT**
(Deputy Director General)
Officer-in-Charge

(PDI-Sept. 26 & Oct. 2, 2003)

Clips

Baratillo sa Balete

THE BUKLOD ng Pag-Ibig Community is holding a rummage sale dubbed Baratillo sa Balete, which will be held on Sept. 27 and 28 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the parking lot of the Buklod ng Pag-Ibig Healing Center at 97 Balete Drive Extension, New Manila, Quezon City. Clothes for adults and children, books and magazines, bags, toys and miscellaneous household items will be put on sale at low prices. The Baratillo sa Balete is open to the general public. For further details, call 724-7546 or 724-7534.

The Venue Storm

THE LAST Quarter Storm of 2003 rages at The Venue-Davao City's largest entertainment hub-as it presents a lineup of special shows featuring top artists from Manila. On Sept. 26 and 27, The Library's finest female stand-up comedians take their act to The Venue as they star in "Women in the Library" featuring Joyce, Jo Ramos, Rita, Sheryll, Eva and Orca. Special guest and show director is Rey Kilay. Tickets are priced at P150, inclusive of one standard drink. Showtime is 9 p.m. The laugh trip continues as Mitch Valdes lets her hair down Oct. 18 in "Mitchbehavin' at The Venue" with special guest Leo Martinez. On Nov. 15, the Last Quarter Storm moves into high gear with the biggest anniversary blowout of The Venue featuring concert queen Pops Fernandez with special guests Franco Laurel and comedian John Lapus.

RP Internet influence

EVERYDAY, people around the world use the Internet to enhance the personal and business aspects of their lives. In the Philippines, the emergence of the Internet, and technology as a whole, has definitely influenced the social, political and economic aspects of Filipinos. Learn more about this at the DigitalFilipino 1st ICT Market Research Conference on Sept. 26, when the results of the Philippine Internet Report are launched at the Dusit Hotel Nikko from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Major sponsors are global networking leader Cisco and HP. The World Internet Project (WIP)-Philippines report is a comprehensive, year-to-year examination of the impact of online technology. For more information, call Sharon Coloma of Events@Work at 897-6391 or 897-7088.

SSC-R Cavite Batch '93 IV-Red reunion

To all IV-Red '93 Baste alumni, the reunion will be held tomorrow at Zelcor's private pool in Remelville Subd. Noveleta, Cavite. Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. and the program will commence at 9:00 a.m. For inquiries call the following: Alvin: 4381051/09194121797, April: 4381954/09178140409, Arnold: 09204057755, Benedict: 4387063/09189404986, and Normandy: 09192597868.

ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 INNER SENSES
3 THX GUARANTEED SEATS GIGLI (Exclusivo) 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00
4 THE MEDALLION
5 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

GB1 GREENBELT 1
ArtFilm
1 AUSTRALIAN FILMFEST
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10
MARTIN NIEVERA Sep. 26 & 27 9PM
LANI MISALUCHA Oct. 10 & 11, 9PM

GB3 GREENBELT 3
1 THX GUARANTEED SEATS ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 12:35 / 45 4:55 7:05 9:15 11:25
2 THX GUARANTEED SEATS GIGLI (Exclusivo) 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30 12:00
3 GUARANTEED SEATS PEOPLE I KNOW 1:00 3:05 5:10 7:15 9:20 11:25
4 GUARANTEED SEATS BASIC 1:50 4:00 6:10 8:20 10:30
5 GUARANTEED SEATS HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE [illegible]

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THX ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
4 BASIC
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 and send to 2333. Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 BASIC
3 INNER SENSES
4 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
9 MEDALLION
10 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4466
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 4 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 FIRST TIME
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 FIRST TIME
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 MEDALLION

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 893-4225, 892-2503

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SWAT
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2
3

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 FIRST TIME
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 RESERVE
5 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
6 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
7 FIRST TIME
8 FREDDY VS JASON
9 BASIC

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928
1 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 FIRST TIME
6 MEDALLION
7 FREDDY VS JASON
8 BASIC
9 KALABIT

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082
1 FIRST TIME
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
4 MEDALLION
5 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
3 FREDDY VS JASON
4 FIRST TIME
5 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 RESERVE

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson WILD BUTTERFLY
Lords LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
Jennet RESERVE

YARRI THAE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 LIGAYA KAATUMBAS NG BUHAY
4 FIRST TIME

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 MEDALLION
3 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
4 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
5 FIRST TIME

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 FIRST TIME
3 MEDALLION
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 FREDDY VS JASON
6 BASIC
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) TEL. (049) 837-0926
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KALABIT
3 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 MEDALLION
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KALABIT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 MEDALLION
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KALABIT

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 SWAT
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
3 SWAT
4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 SWAT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 FIRST TIME
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 MEDALLION

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 MEDALLION
4 KALABIT
5 FIRST TIME

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 KALABIT
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KALABIT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 LEGALLY BLONDE
2 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
3 KALABIT
4 SWAT

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 SWAT
3 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KALABIT
4 FIRST TIME

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 FIRST TIME
4 NAKED WEAPON

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887-0121
1 KUNG AKO NALANG SANA
2 NAKED WEAPON
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 RESERVE

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

inner senses

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868
1 BASIC
2 THE MEDALLION
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
7 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
8 FIRST TIME

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FIRST TIME
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 ASBOOBS
7 THE MEDALLION
8 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
9 BASIC
10 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 S.W.A.T.
6 THE MEDALLION
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
8 BASIC
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 DADDY DAY CARE
11 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
12 FIRST TIME

SM CITY MANILA
5239240
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 THE MEDALLION
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
5 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
8 FIRST TIME
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 PEOPLE I KNOW
11 INNER SENSES
12 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 - 6329401
1 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
2 BASIC
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 CINE EUROPA
7 NOWHERE IN AFRICA
8 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
9 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
10 THE MEDALLION
11 INNER SENSES
12 LIGAYA, KATUMBAS NG BUHAY

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452
1 THE MEDALLION
2 INNER SENSES
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 PEOPLE I KNOW
6 BASIC
7 FREDDY VS. JASON
8 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM SOUTHMALL
8068888
1 BASIC
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
5 THE MEDALLION
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 FREDDY VS. JASON
9 FIRST TIME
10 INNER SENSES

SM CITY CEBU
2313876
1 BASIC
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
6 FIRST TIME
7 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
8 NAKED WEAPON

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422
1 DADDY DAY CARE
2 RESERVED
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 S.W.A.T.
7 RESERVED
8 SPY KIDS 3-D

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 FIRST TIME
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975
1 FIRST TIME
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
4 FREDDY VS. JASON

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 FREDDY VS. JASON
3 FIRST TIME
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998
1 S.W.A.T.
2 DADDY DAY CARE
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 BASIC
5 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
6 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS

SM BICUTAN
776-3055
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 BASIC
4 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884
1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
3 DADDY DAY CARE
4 S.W.A.T.

THE PODIUM 5
NOWHERE IN AFRICA
10:15 FS/10:35 MF/1:25/4:15/7:05/9:25 LFS /10:00 LMF/12:20 END
ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
10:05 MF/12:10/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

Friday
SM Megamall Cinema 6
CINE EUROPA
ADMISSION IS FREE

Karnaval (France)
2:00 p.m.
Professional Arms (Italy)
4:30 p.m.
Zus & Zo (The Netherlands)
7:00 p.m.
The Praying Mantis (Austria)
9:30 p.m.

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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FOR ALL BRANCHES

Galleria 632-9115-16 687-0593
THX /All Digital
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30 THX
2 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
3 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
4 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
5 FREDDY VS. JASON 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
6 BASIC 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
7 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS 11.00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
8 PEOPLE I KNOW 12:05, 2:15, 4:30, 6:40, 9:00
9 NOWHERE IN AFRICA 10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
10 INNER SENSES 12:05, 2:15, 4:30, 6:40, 9:00
MATINEE PRICE: P100 THX cinema / P75 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 526-7185 536-7809 to 12
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
2 FREDDY VS. JASON 10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
3 THE MEDALLION 10:10, 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40
4 PEOPLE I KNOW 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
5 INNER SENSES 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
6 BASIC 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
7 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50

Metro East Marcos hway 682-8193/09 682-8280
1 FREDDY VS. JASON
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 BASIC
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 THE MEDALLION
8 1ST TIME

Novaliches 935-3229 / 31
1 THE MEDALLION
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 FREDDY VS. JASON
4 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE
7 BASIC
8 1ST TIME

Star Mills (045)875-1927 (045)761-5270
1 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
2 1ST TIME
3 VISIBLE SECRET
4 MR. BONES
5 FREDDY VS. JASON
6 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO

Imus (046)471-6188 / 875-5858
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 FREDDY VS. JASON
5 1ST TIME
6 THE MEDALLION

Bacolod (034)441-0458/59
1 SPY KIDS 3D
2 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 DADDY DAY CARE
5 S.W.A.T.
6 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN

Iloilo (033)336-8070 to 78
1 2 FAST 2 FURIOUS
2 S.W.A.T.
3 SPY KIDS 3D
4 LEGALLY BLONDE 2
5 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
6 DADDY DAY CARE

Sta. Rosa Laguna (049)837-0907
1 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
2 KALABIT
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 1ST TIME
5 THE MEDALLION

Malabon 288-0985/2575
1 LIGAYA KATUMBAS NG BUHAY
2 ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO
3 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA
4 KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA

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Novaliches 9353229 * Imus (046) 4716188 * Starmills (045) 9615318
Bacolod (034) 4410453 * Iloilo (033) 3368070
Sta. Rosa (049) 8370907 * Malabon 2882575

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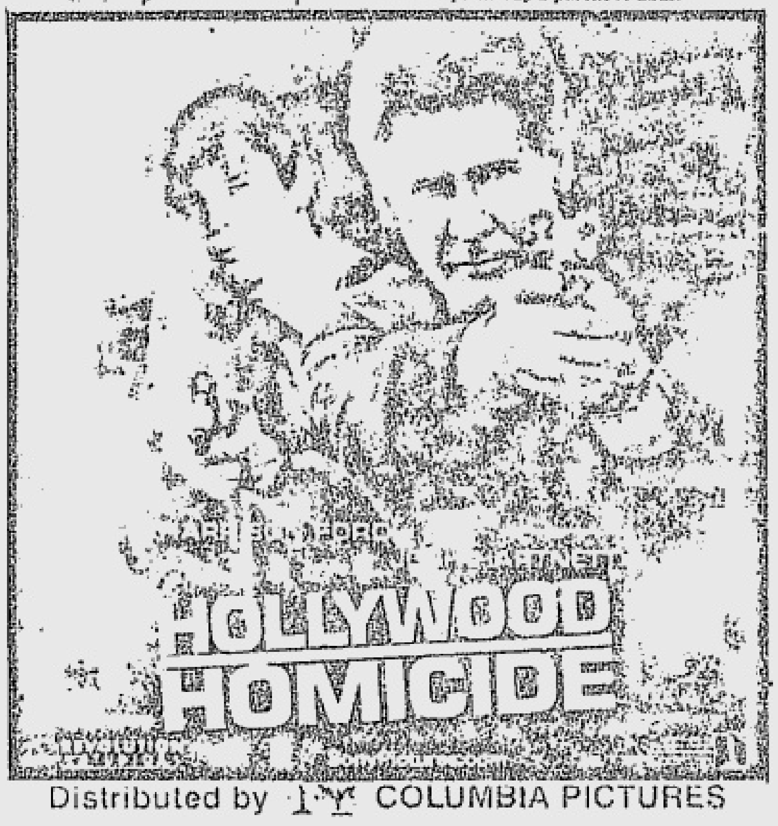
#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA FOR 2 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS
MTRCB ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.

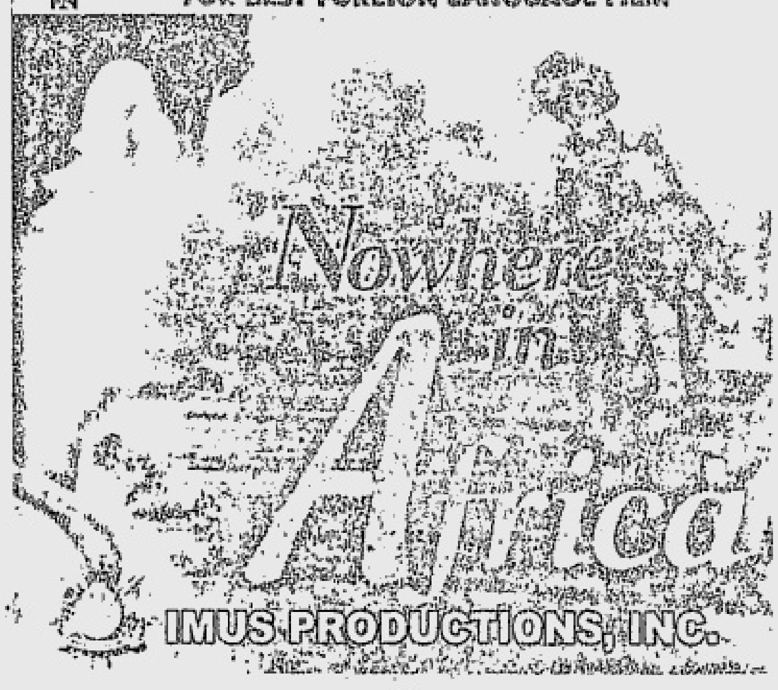
TWICE THE TERROR
FREDDY vs JASON

"2 Thumbs Up!" for Harrison Ford & Josh Hartnett
2ND MAXIMUM ACTION WEEK!
MTRCB ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE

Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

NOW SHOWING!
R-13 BY THE MTRCB
WINNER OF THE 2002 OSCAR ACADEMY AWARDS FOR BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM


Nowhere in Africa
IMUS PRODUCTIONS, INC.

THEATRE MALL

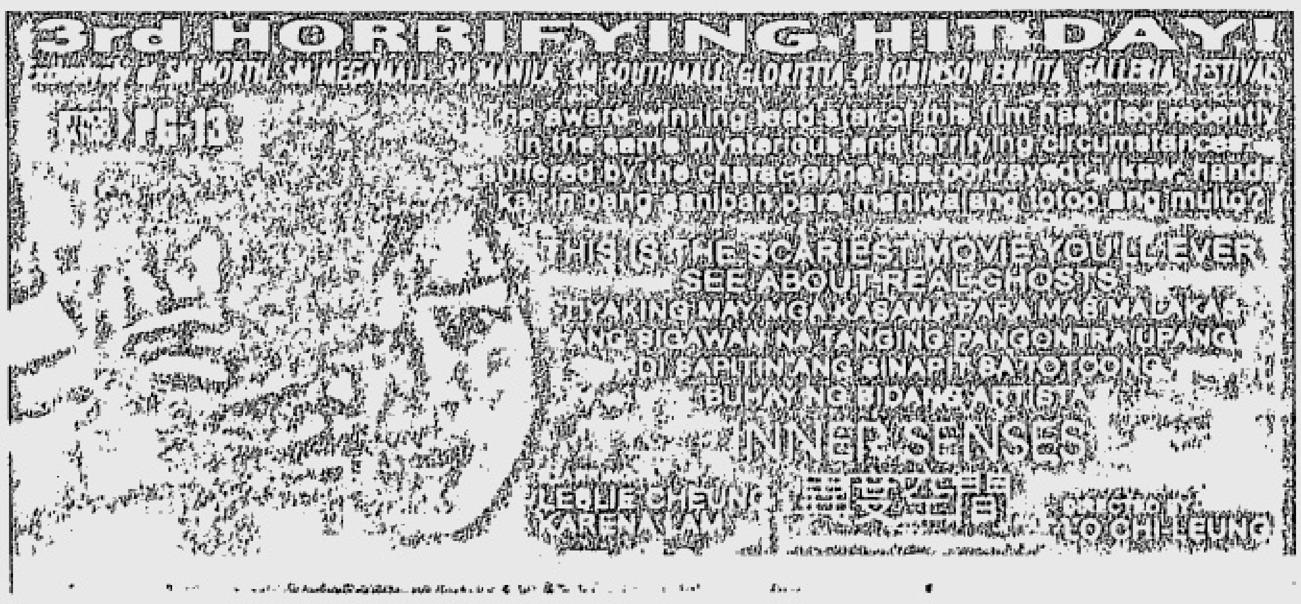
CINEMA 1	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO 11:05 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 R18	
CINEMA 2	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00 GP	

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SEPT 19 & 20	PILITA CORRALES "THE SHOW"	9:00PM
SEPT 21	BANDS "POSITIVELY LIVE"	M

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS. CALL 7[illegible]

3rd HORRIFYING HIT DAY!
SM NORTH, SM MEGAMALL, SM MANILA, SM SOUTHMALL, GLORIETTA 4, ROBINSON ERMITA, GALLERIA, FESTIVAL



The award-winning lead star of this film has died recently in the same mysterious and terrifying circumstances suffered by the character he has portrayed... Ikaw, handa ka rin bang saniban para maniwalang totoo ang multo?

THIS IS THE SCARIEST MOVIE YOU'LL EVER SEE ABOUT REAL GHOSTS.
TIYAKING MAY MGA KASAMA PARA MAS MALAKAS ANG SIGAWAN NA TANGING PANGONTRA UPANG DI SAPITIN ANG SINAPIT BA TOTOONG BUHAY NG BIDANG ARTISTA.

INNER SENSES
LESLIE CHEUNG
KAREN MOK
directed by LO CHI-LEUNG

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Hard-hitting.
5 DEAD IN ROHOL AMBUSH

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Ali 3
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Ali 6 BAS
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ROI

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QUEZON-1
REMAR
REMAR

NOVA MALL NOVALICHES CINEMA
A
B
C

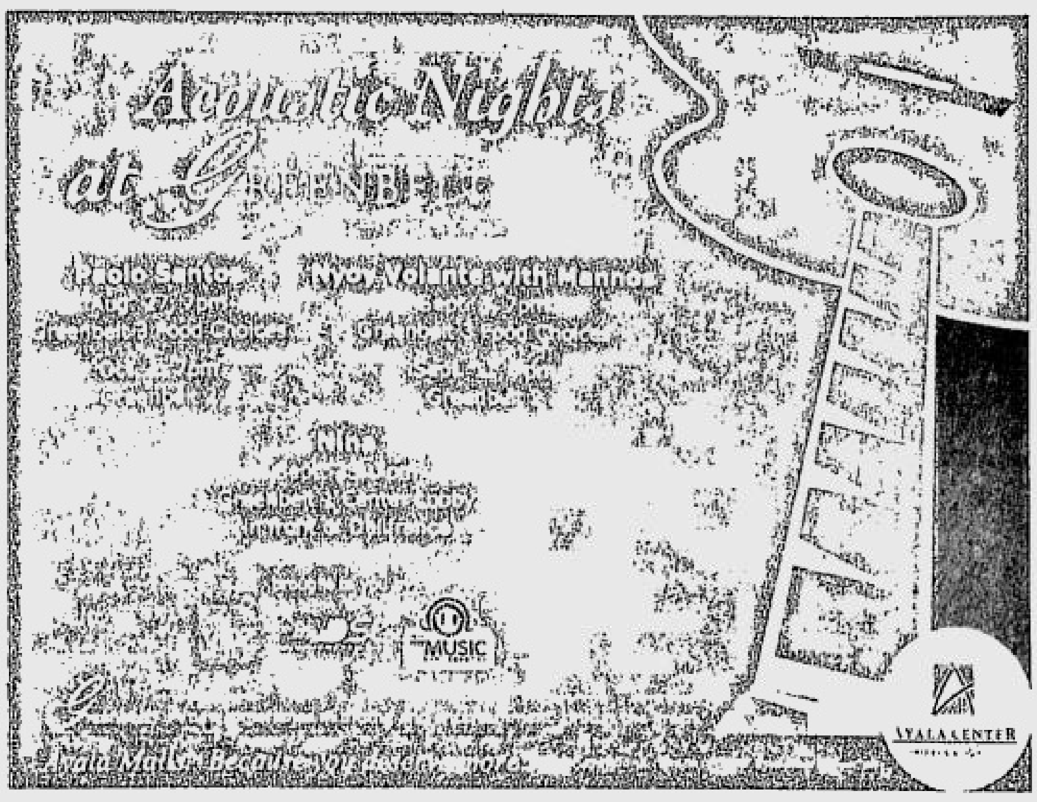
MANDALUYONG CITY
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL 635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1
CINEMA-2

CAINTA RIZAL
STA. LUCIA EAST (681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1
CINEMA-2
CINEMA-3
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)
CINEMA-5 (DTS)
CINEMA-6
CINEMA-7
CINEMA-8
CINEMA-9 (DTS)
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)
CINEMA 11 (SDDS)
CINEMA-12
CINEMA-14
CINEMA-15

LORES
CINEMA 2
CINEMA-3

NE CINEMAGIC CABANATUAN
(LAS PINAS)
CINEMA-1
CINEMA
CINEMA-4

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL
(PARANAQUE)
CINEMA
CINEMA
CINEMA-4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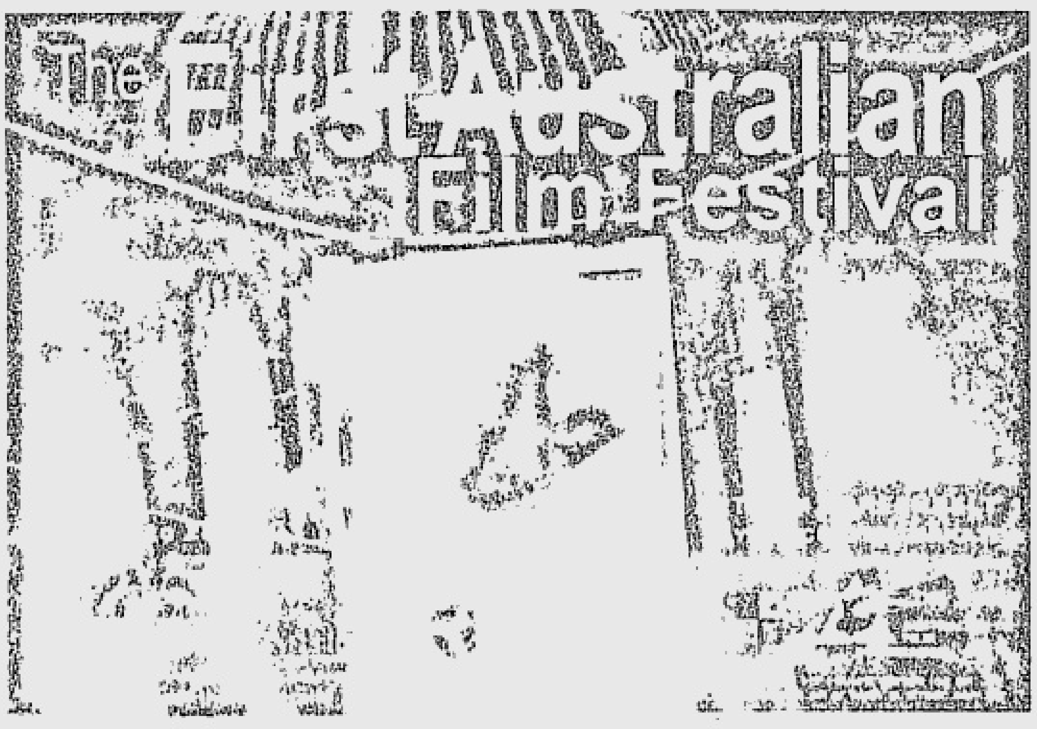
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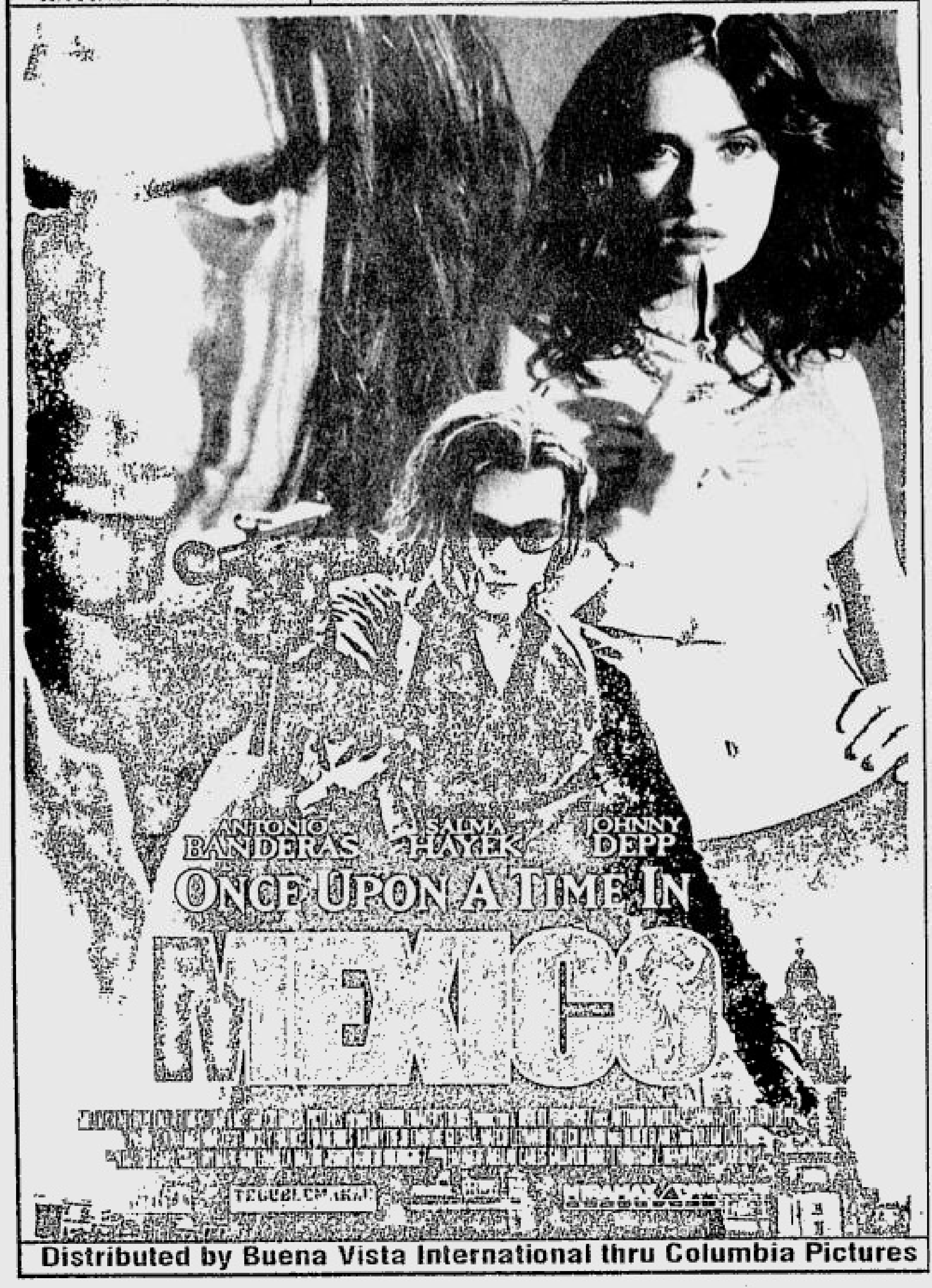
ANTONIO BANDERAS
SALMA HAYEK
JOHNNY DEPP
ONCE UPON A TIME IN
MEXICO

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

BASIC PG13 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00	ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO R18 11:40, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00	KUNG AKO NA LANG SANA GP 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
PEOPLE I KNOW R18 11:30, 1:30, 3:40 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	SPY KIDS 3D GP 11:40, 3:40, 7:40 DADDY DAY CARE GP 1:40, 5:40, 9:40	HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE PG13 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

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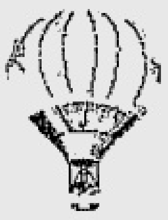

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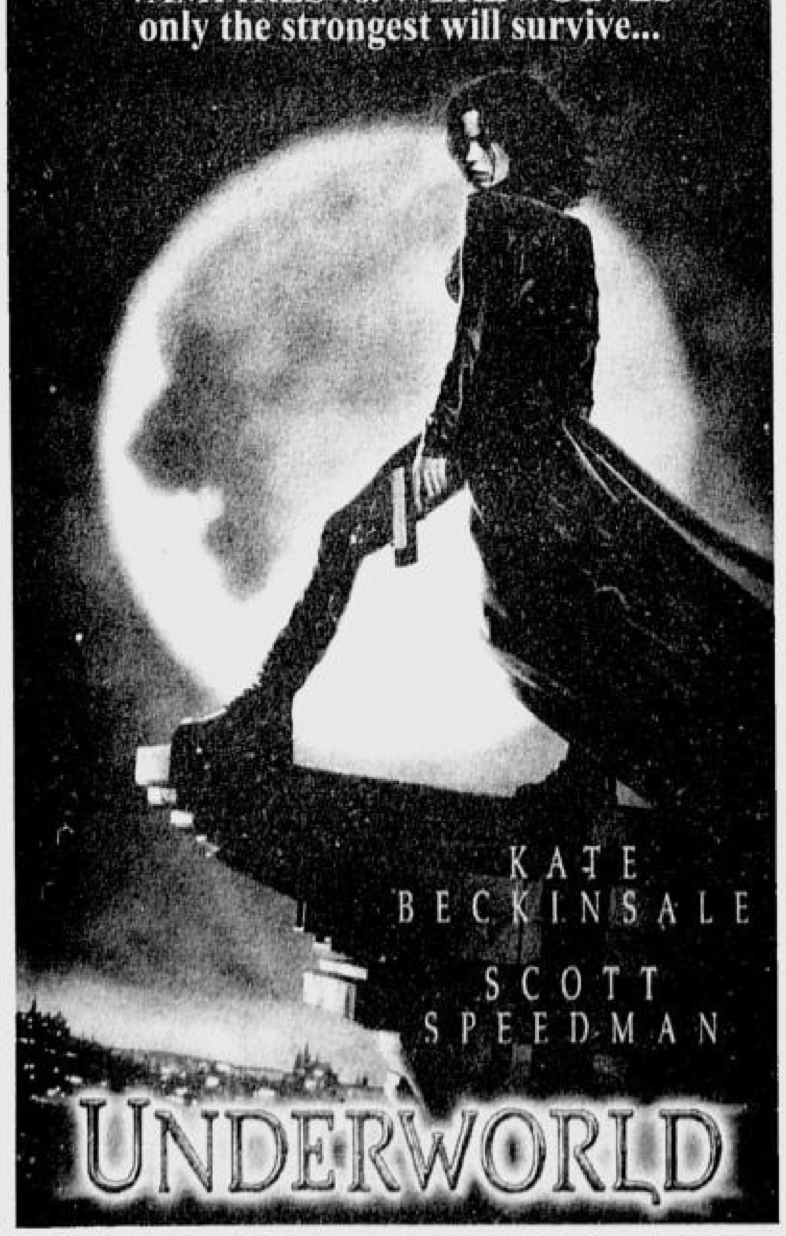

VAMPIRES vs. WEREWOLVES
only the strongest will survive...

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SCOTT SPEEDMAN
UNDERWORLD

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

What does gorgeous Jerry Yan love?

Story on page C2

BIG STAR IN ASIA. Newest image model Jerry Yan in blue Bench cotton jersey tee and overhauled straight-leg jeans

WHAT'S ON at Robinsons

Robinsons Malls FOOD COURT
Presents
COOK UP WITH Maggi

Taste the good life with Robinsons Food Court and Maggi. Learn how to whip up great dishes using Maggi products during our cooking demos. Check out sampling activities and have a taste of free sinigang and tinola made with delicious Maggi products. Now isn't that appetizing?

ROBINSONS Malls

Celebrity golfer envious over rival's birdie.

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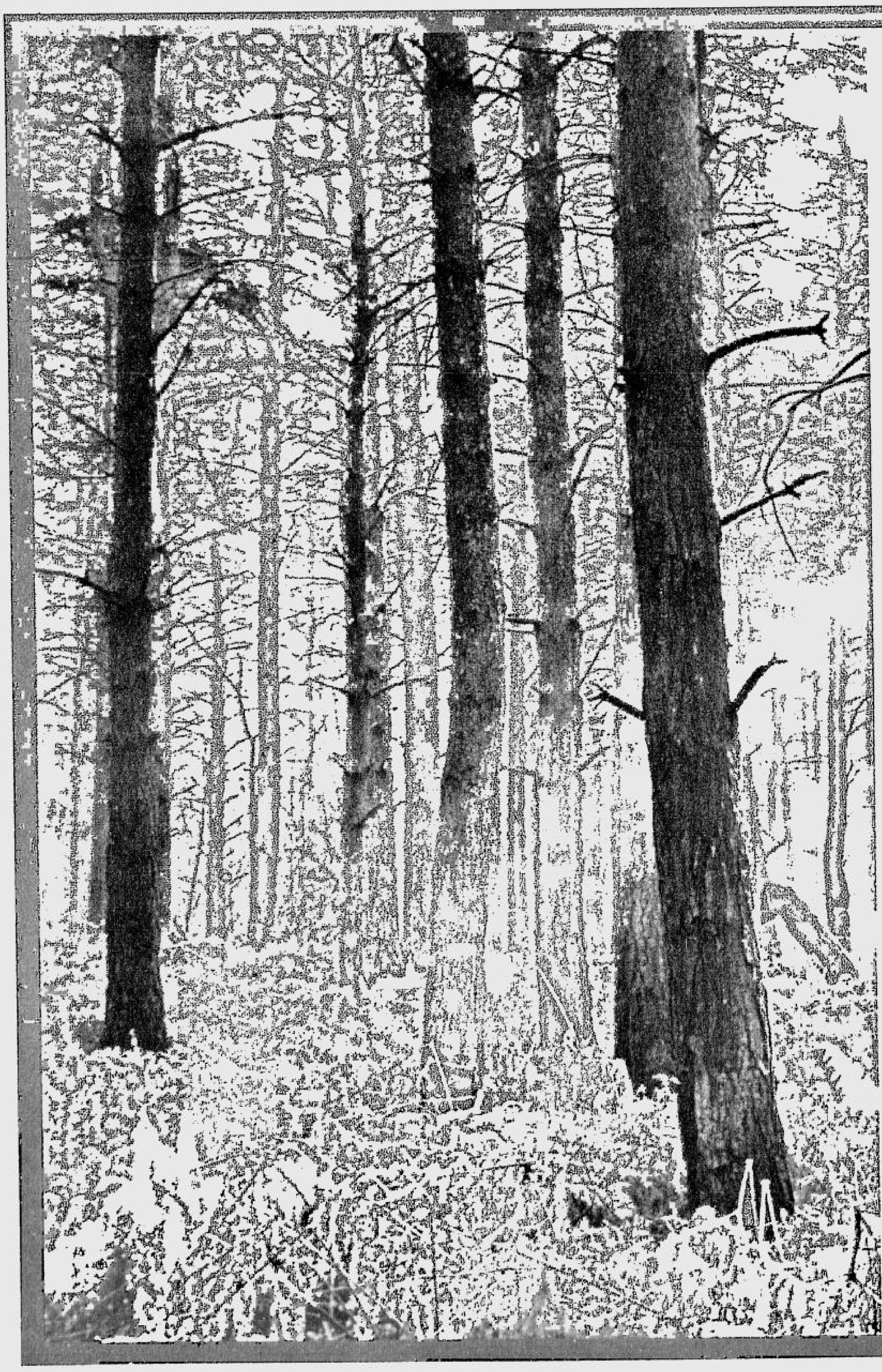

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EVERY SINGLE MORNING."

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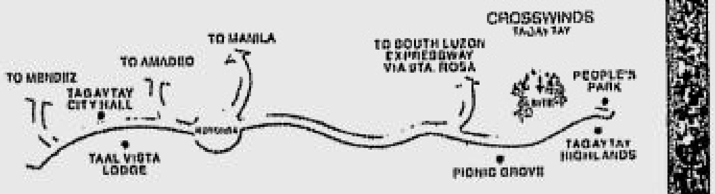
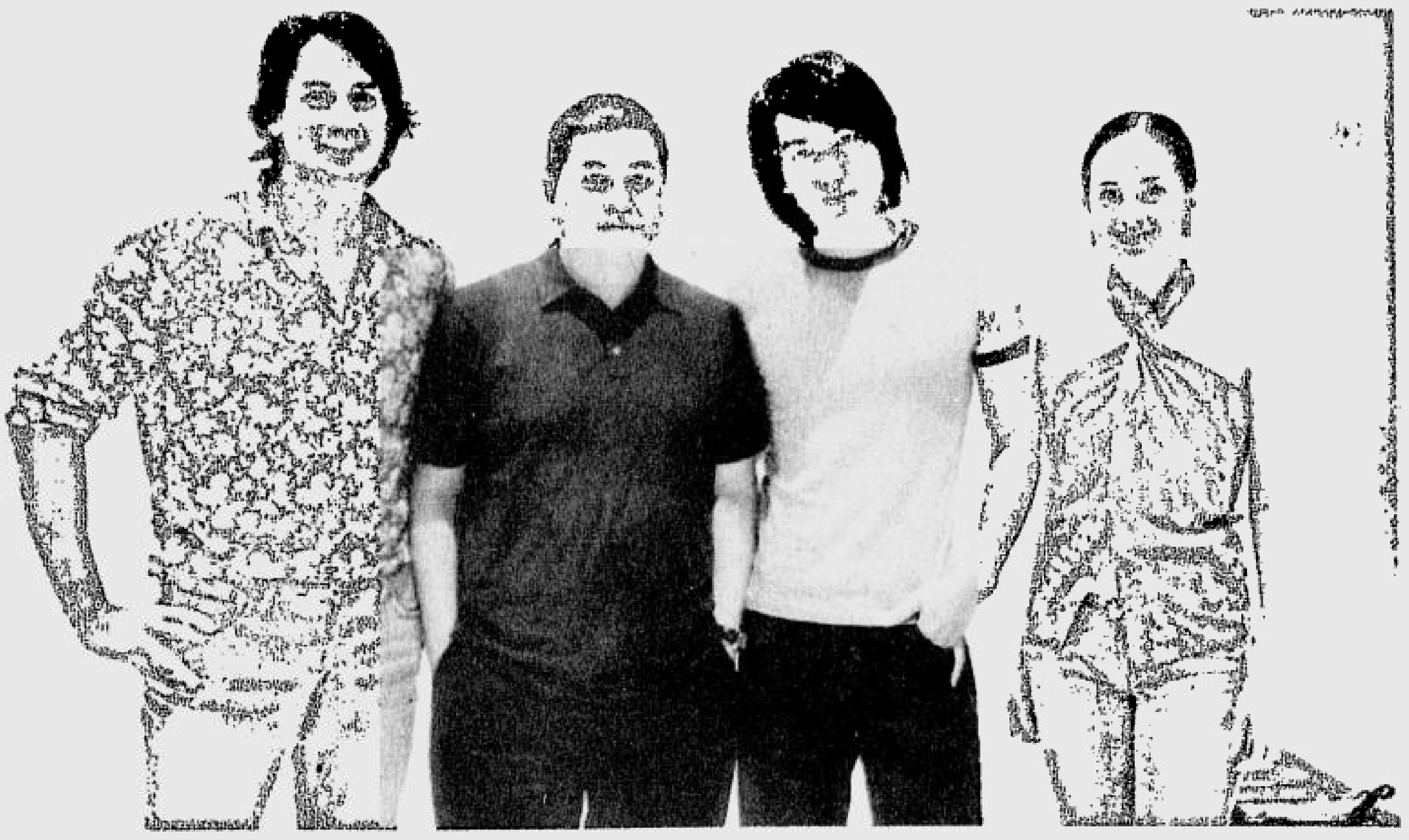


CROSSWINDS
Life is great

Brittany
CORPORATION

HAIR FIX. That's the ever-loyal Benny making sure every strand of hair is where it should be on heartthrob Jerry.



FAMILY PORTRAIT
Bench big boss Ben Chan and image models Richard Gomez and wife Lucy Torres welcome Jerry Yan to the Bench family.

What does gorgeous Jerry Yan love?

By Beia Formoso

HOW often does a haircut make headlines? Well, when it's Jerry Yan aka Dao Ming Si of the phenomenal hit chinovela "Meteor Garden," who gets one, it's breaking news!

Jerry Yan fans (and press) from all over the world were anticipating the new haircut he got for his upcoming movie, "Magic Kitchen," which he co-stars with big Hong Kong names Andy Lau and Sammi Cheng. In Hong Kong, excited fans gathered at the salon where hair couturier Benny (recognize this name from the "Meteor Garden" credits?) worked on Yan's new 'do, only to be dismayed when their idol came out with his head covered by a hat.

So how will Filipinos get to see Dao Ming Si's new look? Why, through Bench, of course!

Marketing genius Ben Chan has just added Yan to the stellar roster of Bench image celebrity models, which until recently consisted mainly of local personalities such as Richard Gomez, Lucy Torres-Gomez, Jomari Yllana, Assunta de Rossi, Diether Ocampo, and Aubrey Miles, to name a few.

Yan is one-fourth of the Taiwanese pop boy band F4, which stars in the drama series Meteor Garden. The 26-year-old actor/singer/model's show-business career took off in 2001 when he bagged the role of the series' main character Dao Ming Si, the super rich boy who falls head over heels for poor girl Shan Tsai.

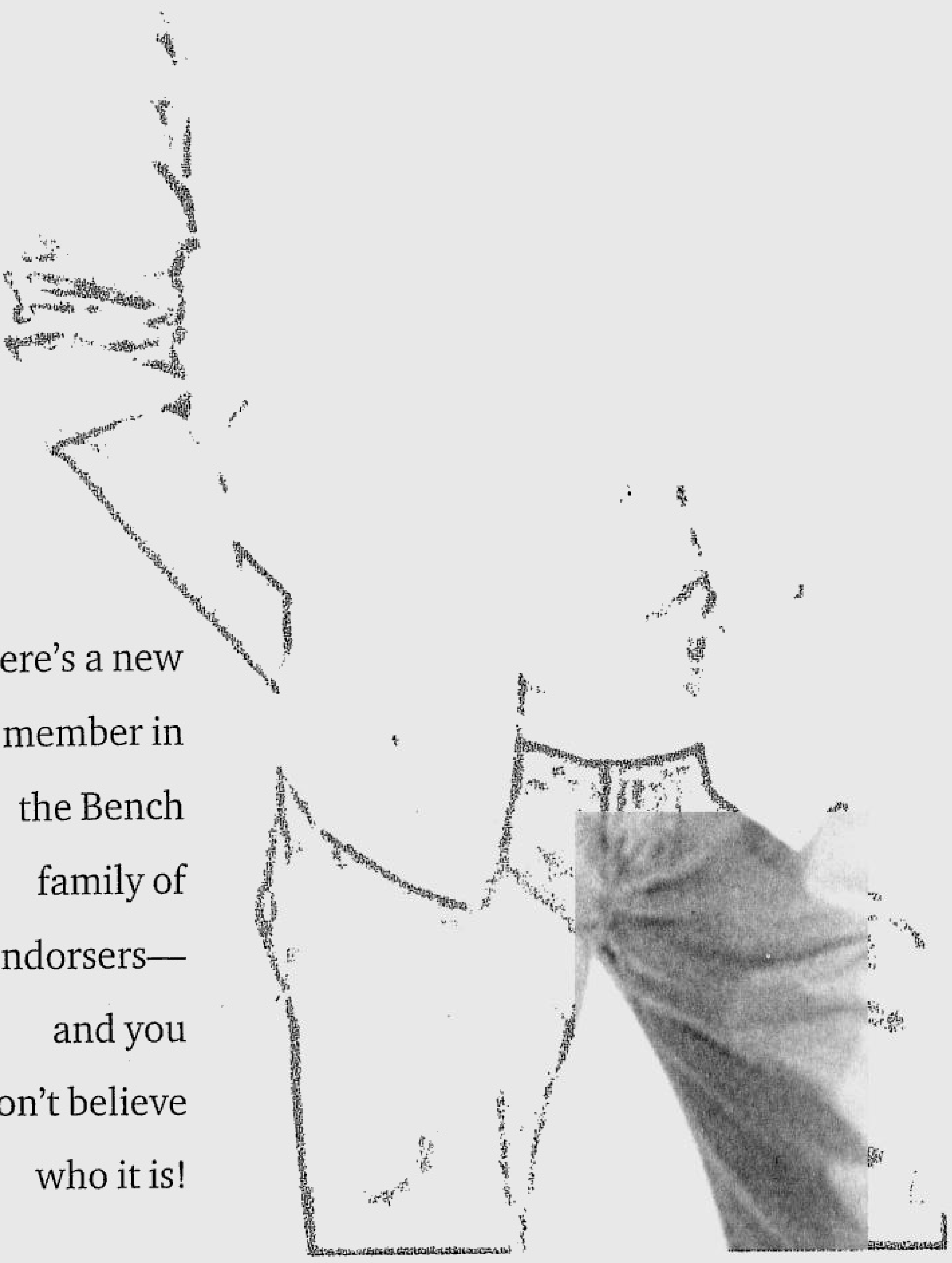
The F4 and "Meteor Garden" are incredibly popular not only in the Philippines and their native Taiwan but also in China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, as well as Canada and the US. In signing up Yan, who is without a doubt the favorite member of the group, Bench has crossed borders and cultures, once again proving to be the premier Philippine brand in the world.

The Jerry Yan "Love *ko ang* Bench" photo shoot took place in Hong Kong on Sept. 12. Just two days before, hundreds of fans packed the HK airport to catch a glimpse of the young actor upon his arrival. The crowd was so out of control that he was pushed to the floor as a result of a stampede that broke out. Fans also camped out in front of his hotel, the Ritz Carlton.

WHAT/C3

THE COLOR PINK. Jerry is one of those guys who can pull off wearing pink; cotton-lycra tee and long-sleeved, striped cotton shirt and khaki jeans, all from Bench

BETWEEN TAKES. Jerry's professionalism and a disciplined set ensured an efficient shoot of Bench ads.



There's a new member in the Bench family of endorsers—and you won't believe who it is!

STYLIST Robert Lai from New York preparing Bench clothes for the shoot

HERBENCH endorser Lucy Torres Gomez with daughter Juliana and Bench PR Keren Pascual

What does gorgeous Jerry Yan love?

From page C2

Yan's following in the Chinese community is so huge that the shoot had to be relocated from his hotel room to a movie studio outside the city, in case fans became disruptive.

Bench sought the talent of young in-demand Japanese photographer Chuando, who just the day before worked with another F4 member, Vic Zhou, for a Taiwanese magazine spread. While most photographers complain about the difficulty in directing actors for ad campaigns, Chuando was all praises for Yan.

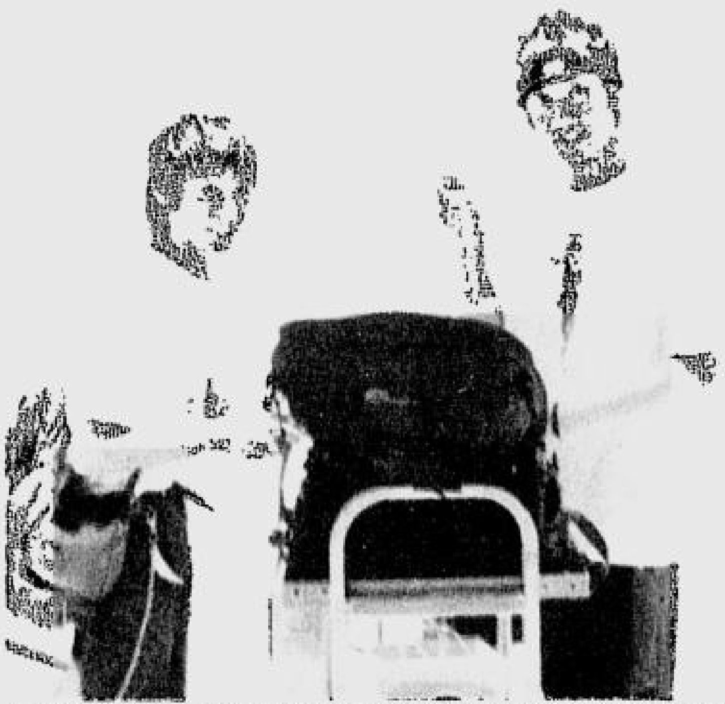
Prior to his role in "Meteor Garden," Yan had a modeling stint, which explains his ease in front of the camera. "He pretty much got the flow, the attitude. It does help that he was a model before... the way he talks to you, he understands, you can tell that he is more mature and he knows what he wants. He will give you some suggestions, which is very different from Vic," says Chuando.

Yan is known for his professionalism when it comes to work, hence the scheduled 10-hour shoot took only eight hours, with few breaks between takes. The environment was very controlled, anything not related to the photo shoot was discouraged, including interviews and candid picture-taking, unlike ad productions here in the Philippines. Yan was constantly protected by his management staff who surrounded him even while walking from the dressing room to the set, which were only 12 feet apart.

Yet despite the serious atmosphere, Yan was able to sneak a few waves and smiles our way, flashing his killer dimple on the left cheek. He played with Richard and Lucy Gomez's little girl Juliana, the youngest Bench model, as he is said to be fond of kids. He even spoke a bit of English, saying, "She looks very sad," when Juliana would pout and cling to her daddy.

For official F4 makeup artist Patty Chou, Yan is her favorite F4 member because "He's very handsome. He's very kind and sweet. He's very serious when he's working but sometimes he's cute."

So cute, in fact, that Filipinos just can't get enough of him—all the more if he's clad in tight Bench inner-wear shirts and denims! Catch Jerry Yan on Bench ads very soon.



HELLO! Chuando Tan, top Singaporean photographer, flashes a "hi" sign at the camera. With him is assistant Kok Hong Ow.

FAST FACTS

Reel name: Jerry Yan Cheng Xu
Real name: Liao Yang Zhen
Nickname: Bao Long, Xiao Bai Tu
Nationality: Taiwanese
Language: Chinese, Hokkien, Basic Japanese
Birthday: Jan. 1, 1977
Zodiac: Capricorn
Height: 180 cm
Weight: 72 kg
Vital statistics: 38, 30, 36
Qualities: Lively, reacts fast, takes his work very seriously
Most unforgettable experience: Teacher cried in front of him because of his poor exam results
Collection: All styles of sunglasses
Favorite movie: "Dancing in the Dark"
Biggest wish: To own an animal farm
Ideal girl : Smart, caring and independent

Commercials

- Doublemint Chewing Gum
- Yuan Chuan Telecom
- Wei Yuan Yoghurt
- Di Ke Ming Eyedrops
- Siemens 2118
- Legend Computers (China region)
- Mingle Shoes (China region)
- Lu Piao Shampoo (China region)
- Pepsi
- Samuel & Kevin

TV Series

- 2000 "Ma La Xian Shi"
- 2001 "Nuu Sheng Xiang Qian Zou"
- 2001 "Meteor Garden"
- 2001 "Lie Ai Shang Hen"
- 2001 "Meteor Rain"
- 2002 "Love Scar"
- 2002 "Come To My Place"
- 2002 "Meteor Garden 2"

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[illegible]

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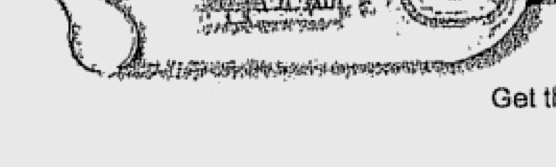
BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

BPI Edge [illegible]

Get the BPI Edge now! Visit any BPI Express Banking center, BPI and

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BPI EDGE has the lowest interest rate among MasterCard credit cards. What's more, I pay interest only on my outstanding balance. And I can choose to transfer my balance from another card [illegible] charge [illegible] [illegible] monthly for one year [illegible]. Plus no annual fees [illegible] monthly membership fees [illegible]

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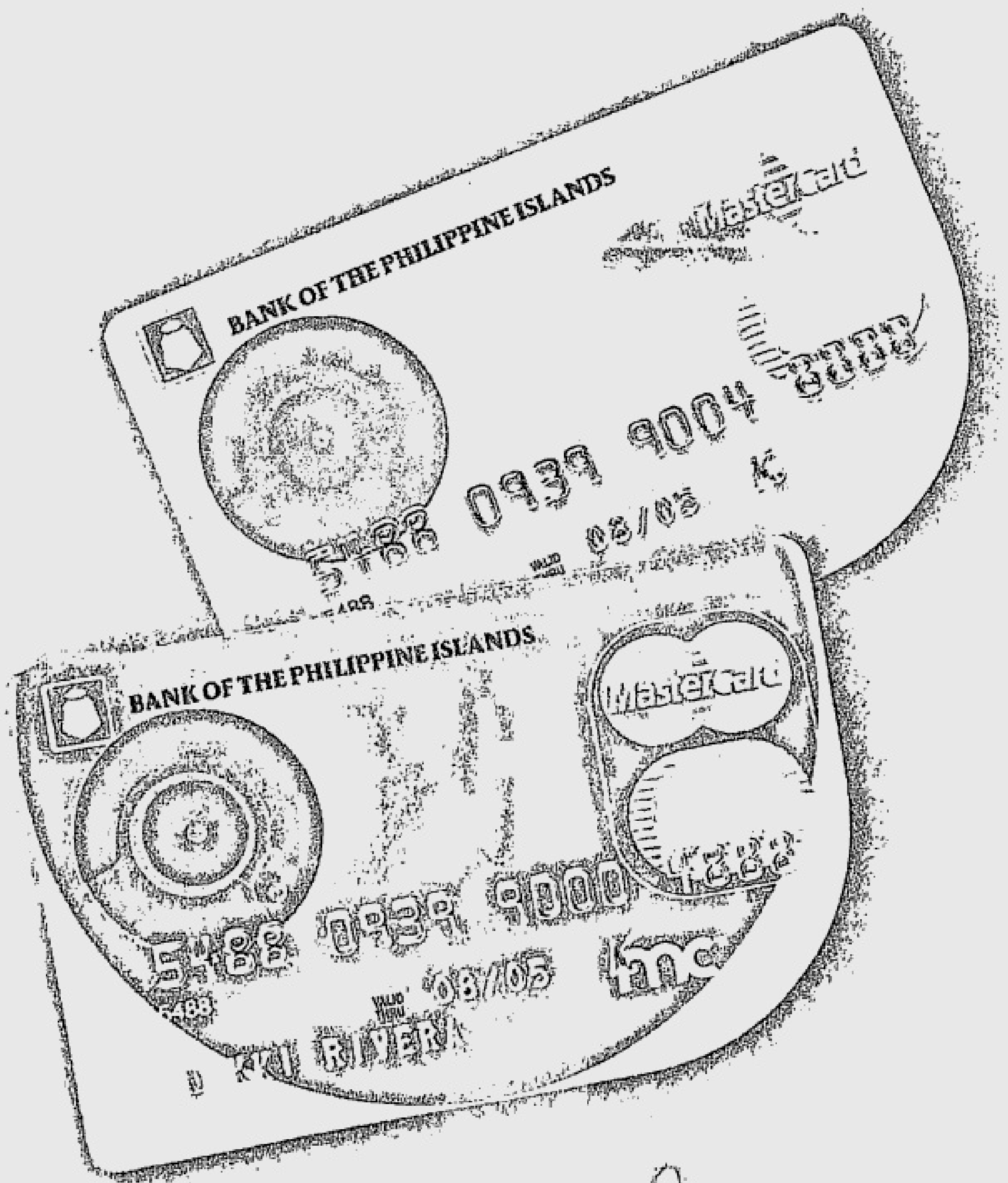
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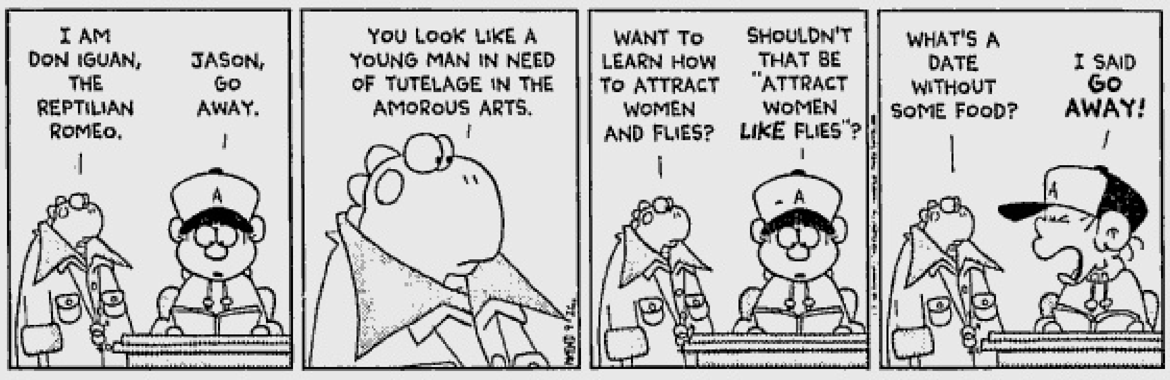
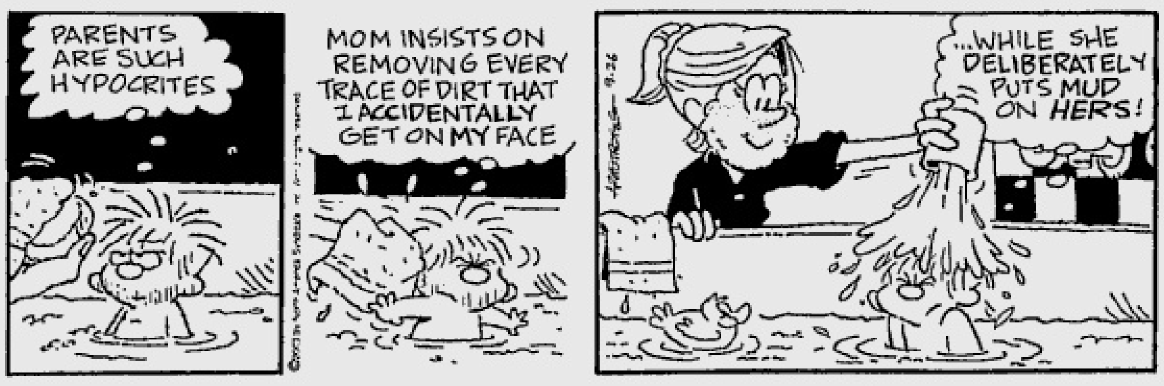
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I AM DON IGUAN, THE REPTILIAN ROMEO.
JASON, GO AWAY.
YOU LOOK LIKE A YOUNG MAN IN NEED OF TUTELAGE IN THE AMOROUS ARTS.
WANT TO LEARN HOW TO ATTRACT WOMEN AND FLIES?
SHOULDN'T THAT BE "ATTRACT WOMEN LIKE FLIES"?
WHAT'S A DATE WITHOUT SOME FOOD?
I SAID GO AWAY!

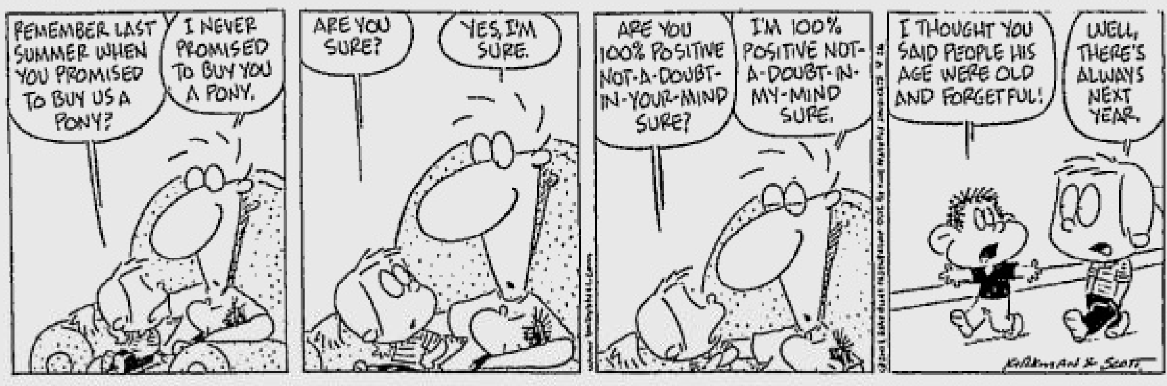
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


PARENTS ARE SUCH HYPOCRITES
MOM INSISTS ON REMOVING EVERY TRACE OF DIRT THAT I ACCIDENTALLY GET ON MY FACE
...WHILE SHE DELIBERATELY PUTS MUD ON HERS!

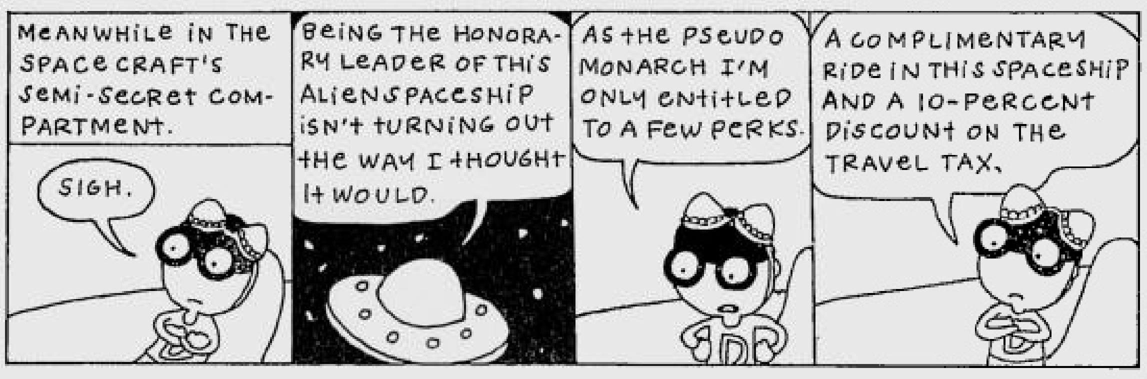
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


REMEMBER LAST SUMMER WHEN YOU PROMISED TO BUY US A PONY?
I NEVER PROMISED TO BUY YOU A PONY.
ARE YOU SURE?
YES, I'M SURE.
ARE YOU 100% POSITIVE NOT-A-DOUBT-IN-YOUR-MIND SURE?
I'M 100% POSITIVE NOT-A-DOUBT-IN-MY-MIND SURE.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID PEOPLE HIS AGE WERE OLD AND FORGETFUL!
WELL, THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT YEAR.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


MEANWHILE IN THE SPACECRAFT'S SEMI-SECRET COMPARTMENT.
SIGH.
BEING THE HONORARY LEADER OF THIS ALIEN SPACESHIP ISN'T TURNING OUT THE WAY I THOUGHT IT WOULD.
AS THE PSEUDO MONARCH I'M ONLY ENTITLED TO A FEW PERKS.
A COMPLIMENTARY RIDE IN THIS SPACESHIP AND A 10-PERCENT DISCOUNT ON THE TRAVEL TAX.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have technical prowess. This is because you are persistent, and you are a perfectionist. You often put your faith in logic rather than in feelings. Many of you have more than one career. You also might have the power to influence others. Work hard this year to achieve your goals: Your payoff lies just ahead.
Birthdate of: T.S. Eliot, poet; Linda Hamilton, actress; James Caviezel, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day to think about how you can improve your closest relationships with others. Remember that you must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Think of three things that you can do that will improve your performance at work. This New Moon is the perfect time for new resolutions.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): There is every possibility that new love can blossom in your life now. Existing relationships will feel re-energized and restored as well.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a good time to make gentle beginnings that could improve your family relationships. It could be as simple as making a phone call. Think about it.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have to give serious thought to purchases that you plan to make. Do your homework. Make sure that you get the best value for your money.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Think about your self-image. Does it reflect who you really are? First impressions are important. Do you like how you dress? How do you want to look?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Both the Sun and the Moon are in your sign today. You are not being self-centered. It's important to put yourself first now. It's that simple.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): No one can be out there in full dazzle all the time. You need time alone to sort out what you want to achieve in the immediate future. Your new year will begin soon.

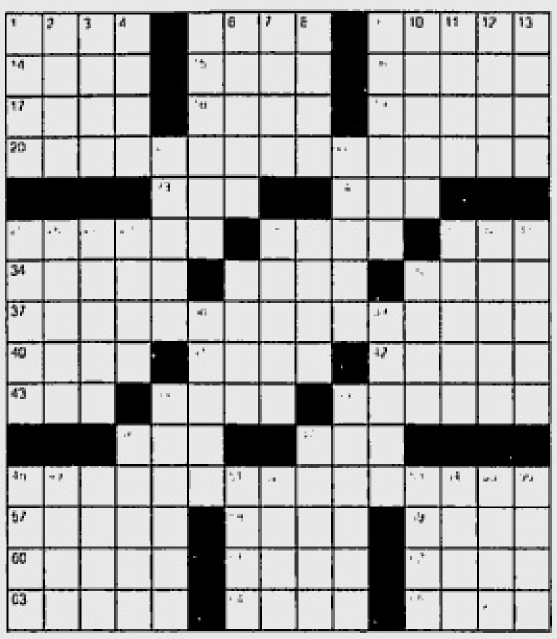
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Friends—especially a female friend—can be a source of comfort to you today. Seek out opportunities to talk to others. Listen to them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is an excellent time to make some serious resolutions about your life direction in general. Where do you want to be 10 years from now? What can you do today to start to get there?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Matters related to publishing, foreign travel, the law, higher education and advanced training have a strong focus for you now. What can you do to improve your chances in these areas?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day to talk to someone about shared responsibilities and obligations. Make sure you understand what is expected of you.

DAILY CROSSWORD



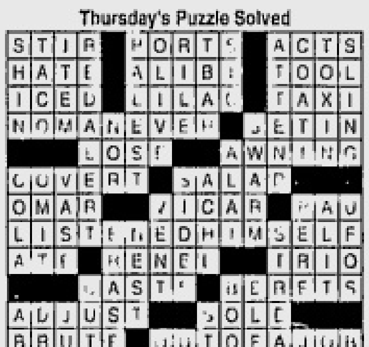
By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

9/26/03

ACROSS
1 Lacking pizzazz
5 Orca groups
9 Tripoli's country
14 Corporate image
15 Balustrade
16 Miscue
17 Canyon reply
18 Sicilian spouter
19 Mindful
20 Incredulous question
23 "__ Now or Never"
24 Sister
25 Empire State capital
29 Fill the hold
31 Fat farm
34 Freed up
35 Rani's garb
36 Arkin of Hollywood
37 Disparaging retort
40 P.M. periods
41 March middle
42 Downy duck
43 Horse staple
44 Arcturus or Rigel
45 In a rational manner
46 Face in the mirror?
47 Escalates
48 Dismissive reply
57 Conscious
58 Prom partner
59 Suffering dull pains
60 Caruso or Domingo
61 Completed
62 Highland hillside
63 Utopias
64 Greek harp
65 E-mail button

DOWN
1 Zipped by
2 Lomond or Ness
3 Turkish title
4 Whistle blast
5 Attractive
6 Solemn vows
7 Sup
8 Large chunk
9 Baseball grouping
10 Novelist Shaw
11 Small nail
12 Yesteryear
13 Neighborhood
21 Tendon
22 Nepal's neighbor
25 Koran deity
26 Bather's sponge: var.
27 Plunder
28 Requests
29 Surgical beam
30 Humanistic disciplines
31 Downswing
32 Discussion group
33 Indignant
35 Pop
36 Related
38 Burn from
39 Tenancy term
44 Actress Suzanne
45 Bailiwick
46 Territory in Canada
47 Downright
48 Break in a fence
49 Was obligated to
50 Ms. Doe
51 Fan-mail recipient
52 Fleet
53 Chocolates with fur?
54 Farm parcel
55 Genghis __
56 Took a gander at

Thursday's Puzzle Solved



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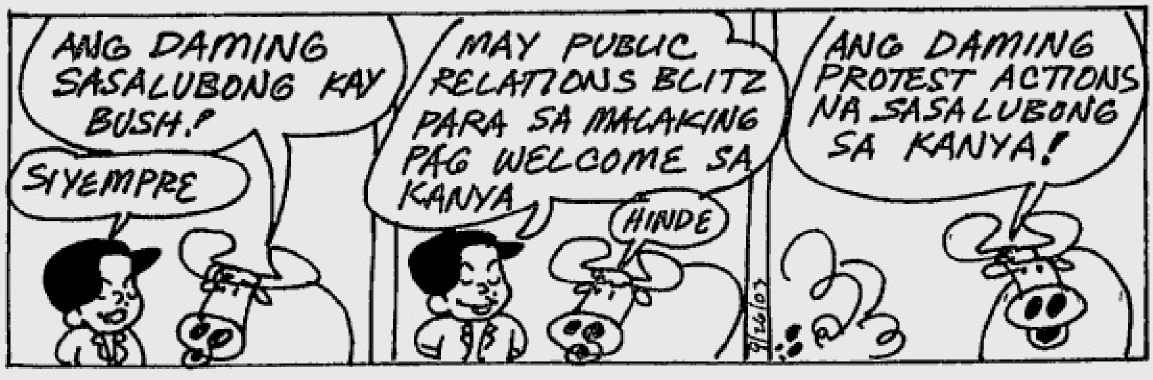
9/26/03

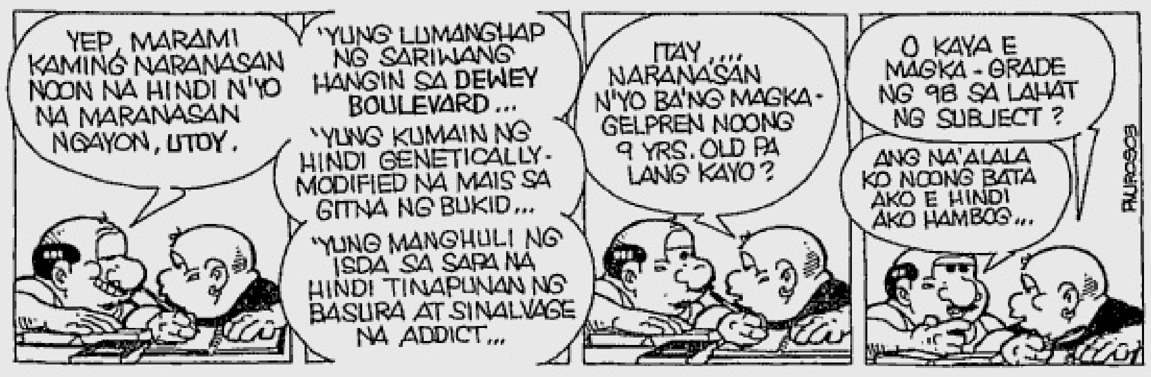
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG DAMING SASALUBONG KAY BUSH!
SIYEMPRE
MAY PUBLIC RELATIONS BLITZ PARA SA MALAKING PAG WELCOME SA KANYA
HINDE
ANG DAMING PROTEST ACTIONS NA SASALUBONG SA KANYA!
9/26/03

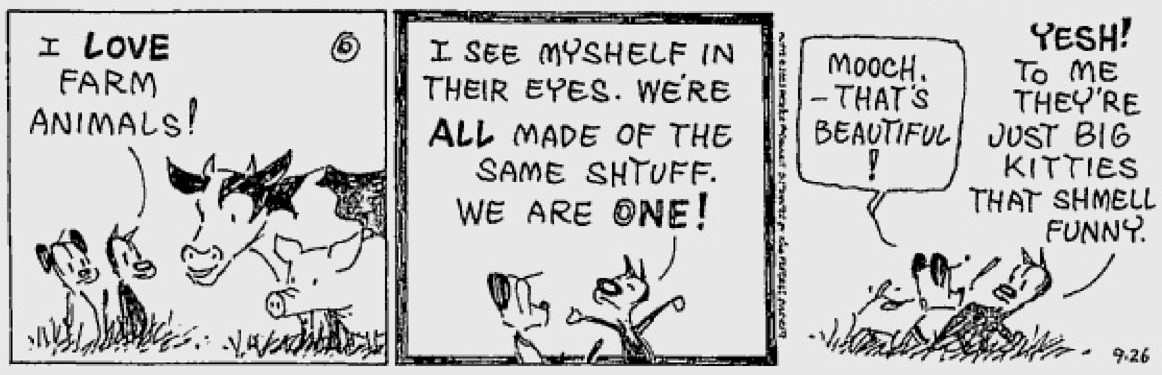
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


YEP, MARAMI KAMING NARANASAN NOON NA HINDI N'YO NA MARANASAN NGAYON, UTOY.
'YUNG LUMANGHAP NG SARIWANG HANGIN SA DEWEY BOULEVARD...
'YUNG KUMAIN NG HINDI GENETICALLY-MODIFIED NA MAIS SA GITNA NG BUKID...
'YUNG MANGHULI NG ISDA SA SAPA NA HINDI TINAPUNAN NG BASURA AT SINALVAGE NA ADDICT...
ITAY..., NARANASAN N'YO BA'NG MAGKA-GELPREN NOONG 9 YRS. OLD PA LANG KAYO?
O KAYA E MAGKA-GRADE NG 98 SA LAHAT NG SUBJECT?
ANG NA'ALALA KO NOONG BATA AKO E HINDI AKO HAMBOG...
PUROSO3

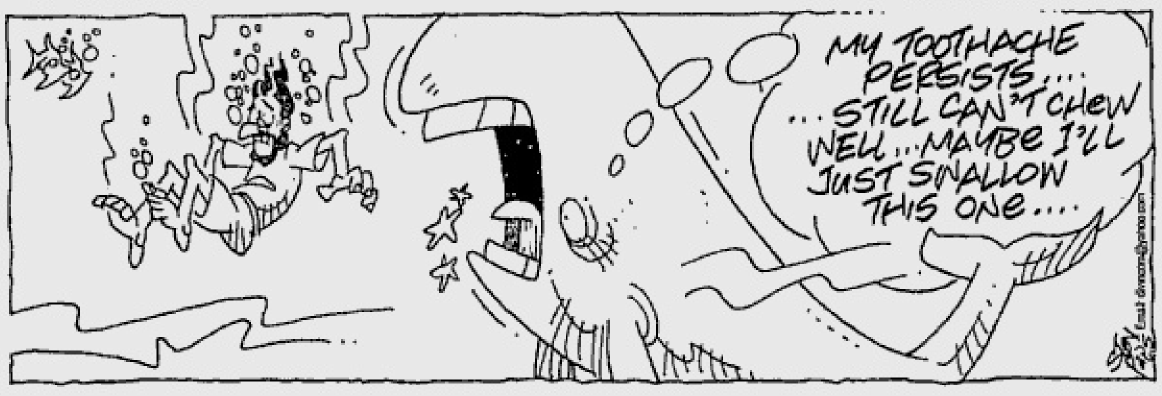
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I LOVE FARM ANIMALS!
I SEE MYSHELF IN THEIR EYES. WE'RE ALL MADE OF THE SAME SHTUFF. WE ARE ONE!
MOOCH, - THAT'S BEAUTIFUL!
YESH! TO ME THEY'RE JUST BIG KITTIES THAT SHMELL FUNNY.
9.26

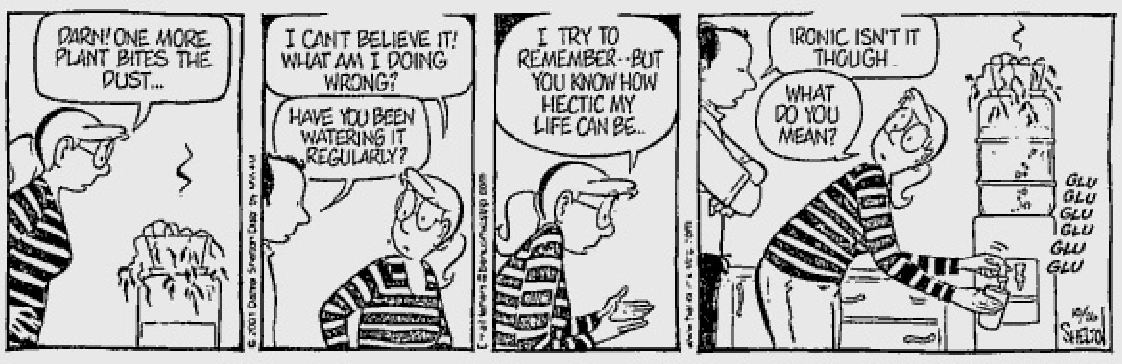
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MY TOOTHACHE PERSISTS... ...STILL CAN'T CHEW WELL...MAYBE I'LL JUST SWALLOW THIS ONE....

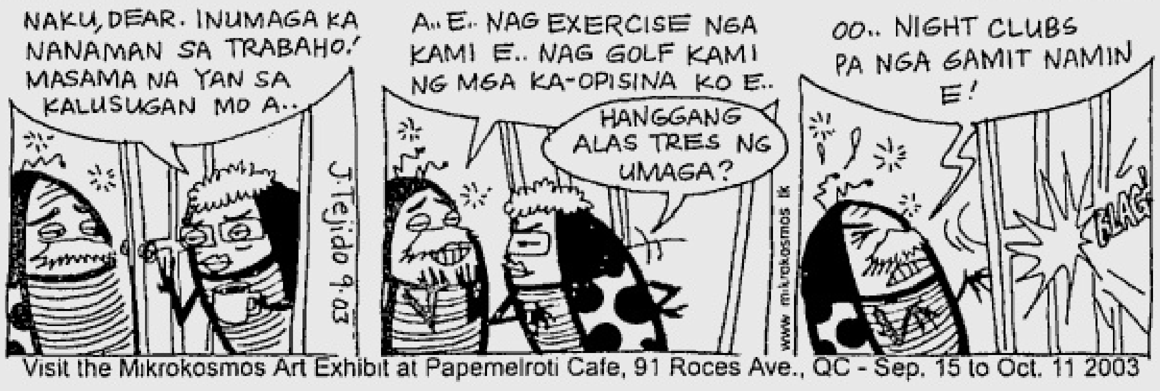
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DARN! ONE MORE PLANT BITES THE DUST...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WHAT AM I DOING WRONG?
HAVE YOU BEEN WATERING IT REGULARLY?
I TRY TO REMEMBER--BUT YOU KNOW HOW HECTIC MY LIFE CAN BE...
IRONIC ISN'T IT THOUGH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
GLU GLU GLU GLU GLU GLU
SHELTON

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKU, DEAR. INUMAGA KA NANAMAN SA TRABAHO! MASAMA NA YAN SA KALUSUGAN MO A..
J. Tejido 9.03
A.. E.. NAG EXERCISE NGA KAMI E.. NAG GOLF KAMI NG MGA KA-OPISINA KO E..
HANGGANG ALAS TRES NG UMAGA?
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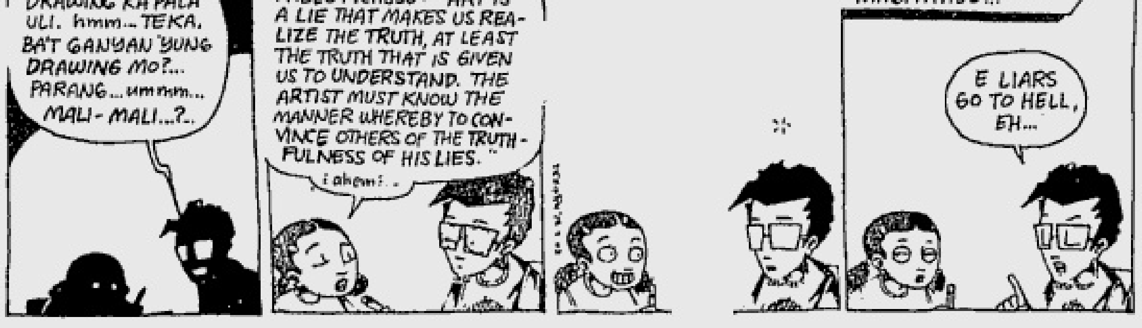
OO.. NIGHT CLUBS PA NGA GAMIT NAMIN E!

Visit the Mikrokosmos Art Exhibit at Papemelroti Cafe, 91 Roces Ave., QC - Sep. 15 to Oct. 11 2003

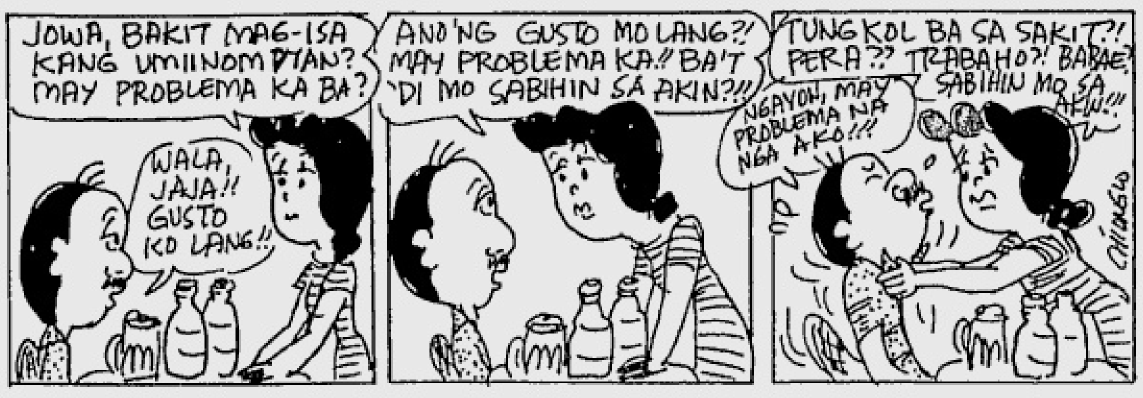
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


O ASTIG! NAGDO-DRAWING KA PALA ULI. hmm... TEKA, BA'T GANYAN 'YUNG DRAWING MO?... PARANG... ummm... MALI-MALI...?..
haay! KUYA, 'KA NGA NI PABLO PICASSO: "ART IS A LIE THAT MAKES US REALIZE THE TRUTH, AT LEAST THE TRUTH THAT IS GIVEN US TO UNDERSTAND. THE ARTIST MUST KNOW THE MANNER WHEREBY TO CONVINCE OTHERS OF THE TRUTHFULNESS OF HIS LIES."
¡ahem!..
SYEMPRE KUYA, AYAW MAGPATALO...
E LIARS GO TO HELL, EH...

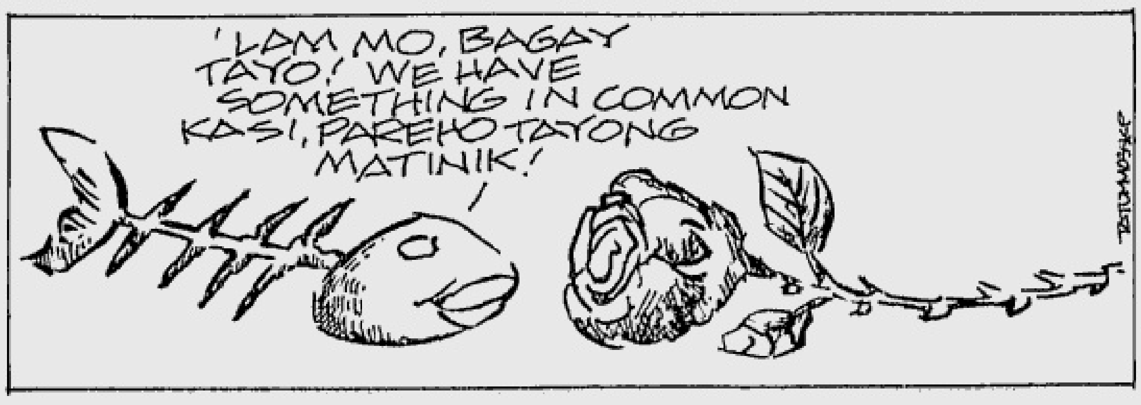
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, BAKIT MAG-ISA KANG UMIINOM D'YAN? MAY PROBLEMA KA BA?
WALA, JAJA!! GUSTO KO LANG!!
ANO'NG GUSTO MO LANG?! MAY PROBLEMA KA!! BA'T 'DI MO SABIHIN SA AKIN?!!
TUNGKOL BA SA SAKIT?! PERA?? TRABAHO?! BABAE? SABIHIN MO SA AKIN!!!
NGAYON, MAY PROBLEMA NA NGA AKO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'LAM MO, BAGAY TAYO! WE HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON KASI, PAREHO TAYONG MATINIK!
TATUM DISKAKE

Stylish red loafers and makeup 101

I JUST bought a pair of red leather loafers because I found them so cute and want to add some color to my collection of black and neutral-colored shoes. The problem is I have no idea what kind and color of pants and outfits I should wear them with. Any suggestions?

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Your new red loafers are a great buy! They are the perfect way to update your look and to provide stylish accents to your ordinary everyday outfits. Moreover, they are very versatile and can be worn with a good selection of colors and pants' styles.

LOAFERS can be worn with a good selection of colors and pants' styles.

For work, wear them with your pantsuits or slacks and basic white polo shirts for a menswear-inspired look that is very hot this season. You can also wear them with cropped pants and a sweater, twin-set or a simple shell for a more classic, Jackie O. feel.

If you want to go more modern and streamlined, match them with skinny pants and a stretch, fitted T-shirt in all white or black.

For weekends, wear your red loafers with any style of jeans matched with different tops from baby tees, wife-beaters (*sandos* and *kamisetas*, in our language), polo shirts and the like. You can even wear them with all cuts and lengths of shorts, from hot pants to narrow *kulots* (shorts that fall to the knees).

To polish off your look, accessorize your outfits with grosgrain or leather belts, native straw bags or large leather satchels, diamond studs or pearl strands and the like, depending on your needs and the look you want to achieve.

Generally, your red loafers will go with colors like black, white, khaki, beige, cream and navy, so you won't have much of a problem matching them with your existing articles of clothing.

But if you are feeling a tad adventurous, why not wear them with other pieces in a similarly vibrant hue? For example, a bright fuchsia tee worn with blue jeans and your loafers would be an offbeat but interesting and eye-catching combination. Mixing bright colors is a great way to perk up any look and to create your own style statements.

Don't be afraid to experiment and try different combinations. If ever in doubt, ask stylish friends to help you out, but do trust your fashion instincts and remember to enjoy yourself in the process.

I want to learn how to do my makeup but don't know where to start. Is there a simple but effective makeup book that I can check out? I also heard that good brushes are essential. What inexpensive brand can you recommend?

There are a couple of books in the market that I find quite helpful for those who want to learn all about makeup. Look for "Asian Beauty" by Margaret Kimura and "Bobbi Brown Beauty Evolution" by Bobbi Brown with Sally Wadyka in any of the local bookstores or through Borders.com, Barnesandnoble.com and Amazon.com in the Internet.

These books discuss everything you want to know about basic makeup, various makeup techniques, the tools you need and, more importantly, how to care for your skin.

"Asian Beauty," as the title implies, focuses more on Asians like you and me, so I strongly suggest that you try to get a copy of this book.

Let me just warn you that reading a book and committing all sorts of theories to memory is not enough to learn how to apply makeup. The best way is still through hands-on experience and by watching a demonstration or having an expert show you the proper technique.

Watch out for schedules of in-store makeup demonstrations that are regularly held in conjunction with the promos of different makeup brands in shops like Rustan's or Essenses. You can even volunteer to be the model for the day so you gain first-hand experience and maybe even some complimentary makeup products.

If you have a special event or a formal function to attend, it might also be a good idea to have your makeup done by a professional. This way, you can find out what kinds of makeup suit you best and what tools you will need.

Make sure you ask as many questions as you want. I'm sure the makeup artist of your choice will be more than willing to help you out by giving you some tips.

Makeup brushes are indeed essential in applying flawless, natural-looking makeup. I would recommend that you invest in natural-hair brushes from brands like Shu Uemura, Mac, Smashbox or Bobbi Brown. They are a bit expensive but well worth the price.

They can last you a long time, if you take good care of them. In fact, I've had my set of Shu Uemura brushes for more than a decade now and I still use them all the time.

Top makeup artist Lala Flores also believes in investing in the best brushes available. "Good brushes made of natural hair are more gentle to the skin. They are soft and pliant so you don't pull on or poke your skin and cause premature wrinkles and lines or blackheads and whiteheads. So eventually, you spend less on skin care products and the like," she says.

If you don't have the budget for this, Flores suggests you buy a set of travel-size brushes that are more affordable and perfect for personal use. "All you really need are five basic brushes, namely, a blusher brush, flat-head eye shadow brush, a contour crease brush, an angled eyebrow brush and a lip brush," she says.

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com

> Your loafers will generally go with basic colors, so you won't have a hard time matching them with your existing clothes

PHOEMELA Barranda

Search on for face of new global campaign

GLOBAL brands Elle Magazine and Guess Watches have launched a worldwide search for the new face of Guess Watches.

The Timeless Beauty International Model Search will end April 2004, Guess Watches' 20th anniversary.

Open to both amateur and professional models and other interested Filipino women, applications together with a recent photograph, may be submitted at any participating Guess retail boutique and Guess Watch distributor in the Philippines.

Elle magazine will choose 600 semi-finalists and Paul Marciano, creative director of Guess, the 15 finalists.

The winner will be announced at the 2004 Basel World Watch and Jewelry Show in Switzerland.

The search was launched at the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell in Makati City featuring Phoemela Barranda, Tweety de Leon-Gonzales, Angel Aquino, Peachy Veneracion, Tetchie Agbayani, Cory Quirino, Tessa Prieto-Valdez, Apples Aberin, Diana Zubiri and Elizabeth Oropesa.

Media partners of the search are Preview Magazine, 88.3 Jam FM, 89.9 TM, K-lite, Wave and 99.5 RT. Official communication carrier is Sony Ericsson.

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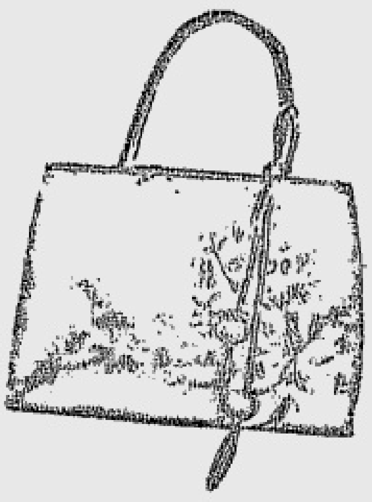
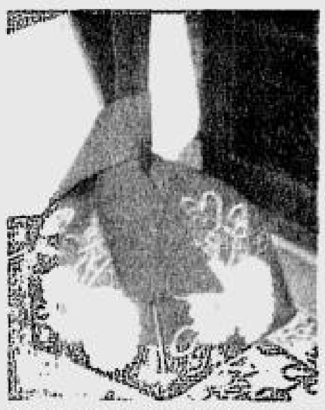


I KNEW I'd gone over to the bad side for buying at the hotel gift shop. But a silk evening bag this pretty was worth my shame—and my $11.

Three hours are not enough to sample the shopper's paradise that is the Vietnamese capital

IT'S $16 for all these six silk, embroidered babies, bought from Sapa (21 Hang Trong Street; tel. 0913-503419). My friends' happy faces made all the haggling worth it. Artworks are also quite a steal; I got four watercolor on rice paper pieces at $4 each. Our companion, Vinchy, got his intricate lacquer paintings at $40 each, originally selling for $55.

Haggling in Hanoi



MYRA'S fancy embroidered evening tote, at $10

MYRA SALVOSA

Text and photos by Cheche V. Moral

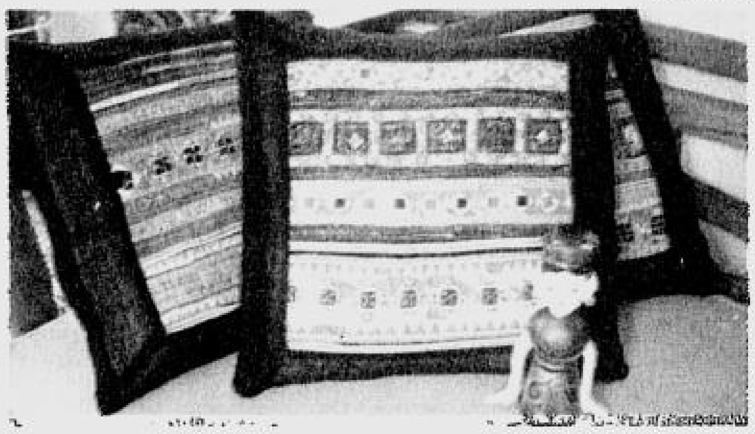
AFTER four days in the charming Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, I was going home with almost twice as much luggage, crammed with soiled clothes and three hours' worth of shopping.

Thick, confusing wad

One US dollar is equivalent to about 15,400 Vietnamese dong—a thick, confusing wad that I regretted having exchanged my $20 to the local currency. Most shops—even sidewalk vendors—accept US dollars; bigger shops accept major credit cards. It may be prudent to have a few dollars exchanged, though. Shopkeepers speak some English, but communicating involves lots of hand and head gesturing.

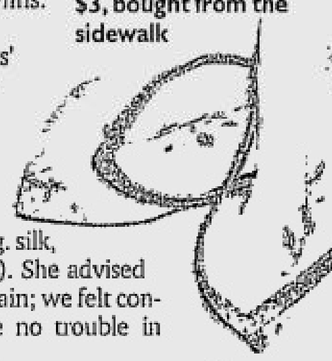
When you're traveling you have to grab the most stuff for a very limited period, in our case, only three short hours. Luckily, my companions Myra and Vinchy of Canon Phils. were up to the challenge.

Myra and I conspired to "kidnap" our bus' Vietnamese guide Lan as we made our stop at the Old Quarter where, as Lan later informed us, the streets are named after each trade (e.g. silk, lacquerware, etc.). She advised us to always bargain; we felt confident we'd have no trouble in that department.



QUILT-LIKE throw pillow cases made by the Sapa minority group, $3 each, displayed proudly in Myra's vacation home. The Vietnamese are also skilled at needlecraft (akin to cross-stitch). I got a nice piece for $10, which I haggled down from $45.

MYRA SALVOSA



HANDPAINTED wooden thongs at $3, bought from the sidewalk

Orchestrated frenzy

We made our first stop at one of the fancier silk shops called Khai Silk. They sold the loveliest *ao dais* (traditional Vietnamese costume, from $40-up), Mandarin-collared jackets, purses, scarves, shoes, ties—all in luxurious silk, naturally. Too pricey for me; I quickly lost interest.

With only one hour left, I was nervous I'd never find the silk bags that were my sole purpose for running around the shopping district like some headless chicken.

Then I spotted Lan, in her flaming red *ao dai*, so I summoned all my daring and braved the chaotic wave of bikers to cross the street. Myra was with her, haggling for a large decorative wooden plate. The $4 piece now has a prime spot in her weekend home, along with quilt-like throw pillows made by the Sapa, a hillside tribe located north of Hanoi.

Next we went into a tiny (about a meter across) inconspicuous bag shop that sold the prettiest—and cheapest—silk bags that were perfect for *pasalubong*. Myra and I went nuts that, even with Lan around to help us haggle, the young guy manning the store seemed overwhelmed and confused he kept jacking up the prices. I liked the bags so much I was feeling frustrated and tempted to fish out the bills from my purse. But Lan insisted $3 was too expensive. She admonished the young man in their local tongue. "No, we leave!" she announced, grabbing my arm. I wanted to scream, "No! I'm paying now!"

Battle of fortitude

It was a battle of fortitude, perhaps no different from how the Vietnamese had fought off invaders for thousands of years. There I was, caught in the middle, already willing to throw my hands in the air without so much as a fight. But times are hard, even for the young merchant. A small profit is still better than to lose a sale so he gave in.

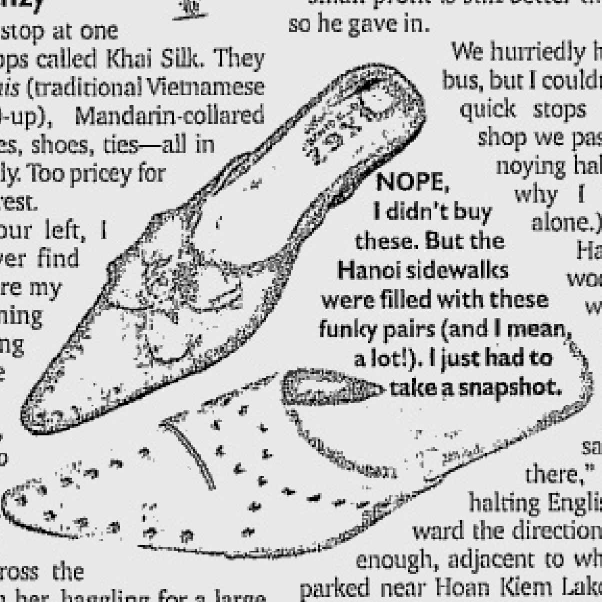
We hurriedly hiked back to our bus, but I couldn't help but make quick stops at every single shop we passed. (It is an annoying habit, I know, that's why I prefer to shop alone.)

Hand-painted wooden slippers were selling for $12-$15 and I just had to have them. "No, expensive!" Lan said. "We buy there," she added in halting English, motioning toward the direction of our bus. True enough, adjacent to where our bus was parked near Hoan Kiem Lake were rows and rows of shoe stores. I got mine from the sidewalk at only $3.

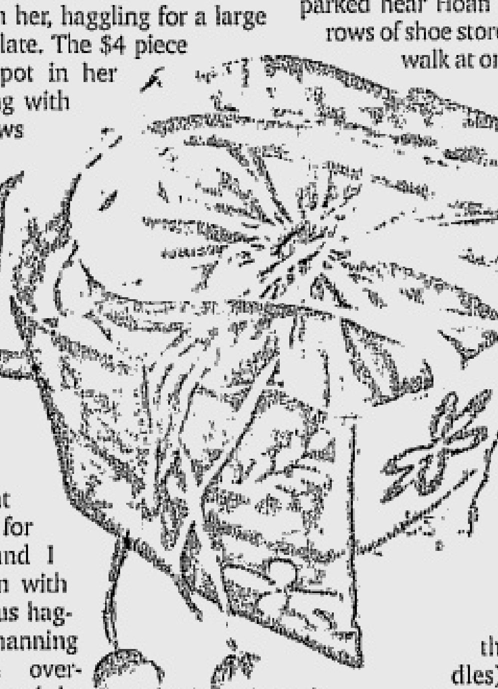
I hated it that there were no night markets in Hanoi, and that shops closed as early as 8 p.m. No thanks to a *looong* side trip to Ha Long Bay, we never got to return for more shopping the next day.

But more than the shopping, I would like to go back to Hanoi to do a walking tour to see the Ho Chi Minh Memorial, the opera house, the museums and the parks, to eat *pho* (noodles) from the sidewalk cafés and to try on an *ao dai*! As they say around here, whenever.

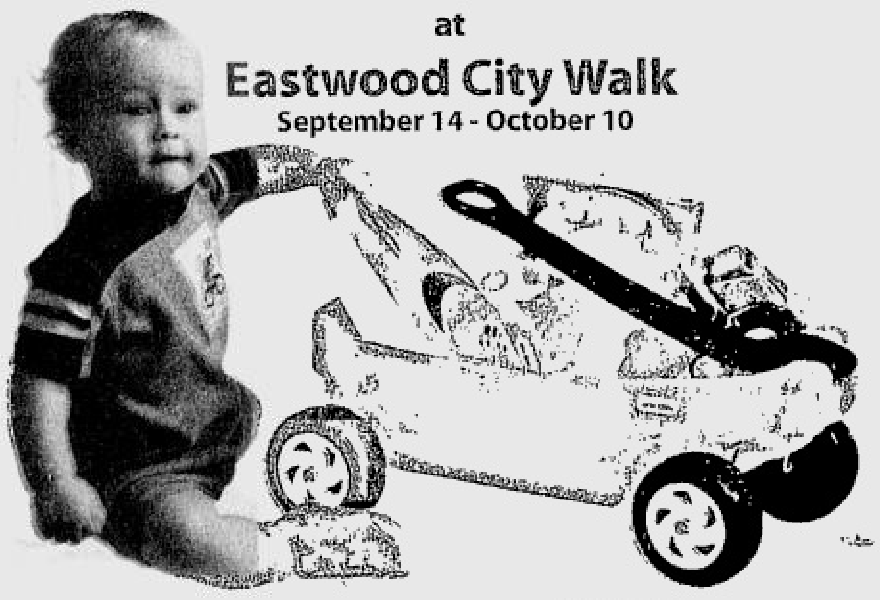
E-mail the author at cmoral@inquirer.com.ph



NOPE, I didn't buy these. But the Hanoi sidewalks were filled with these funky pairs (and I mean, a lot!). I just had to take a snapshot.



BIG, box-shaped drawstring bag at $10, also from Sapa. It's silk and embroidered.



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HURRY! Offer good only from **September 14 to October 10.** Watch out for the **Grand Raffle Draw** on **Oct. 12.**

See posters and fliers for details.

PROGRAM
Sept. 14, 21, 28, Oct. 5 &12

Activity		Shows - 5pm onwards	
12 noon	Registration Coloring Sessions Ceramic Painting	Ventriloquist & Puppet Show	Sept. 14
2 pm	Face Painting and Drawing Workshop by Pentel	Clown Magician & Unicyclist Juggler	Sept. 21
		Exotic Bird & Monkey Show	Sept. 28
4 pm	Fun Games	Clown Magician & Kids Salon	Oct. 5
5 pm	Mascot Perfomance	Happy Hats Show The Amazing Bubble Show	Oct. 12

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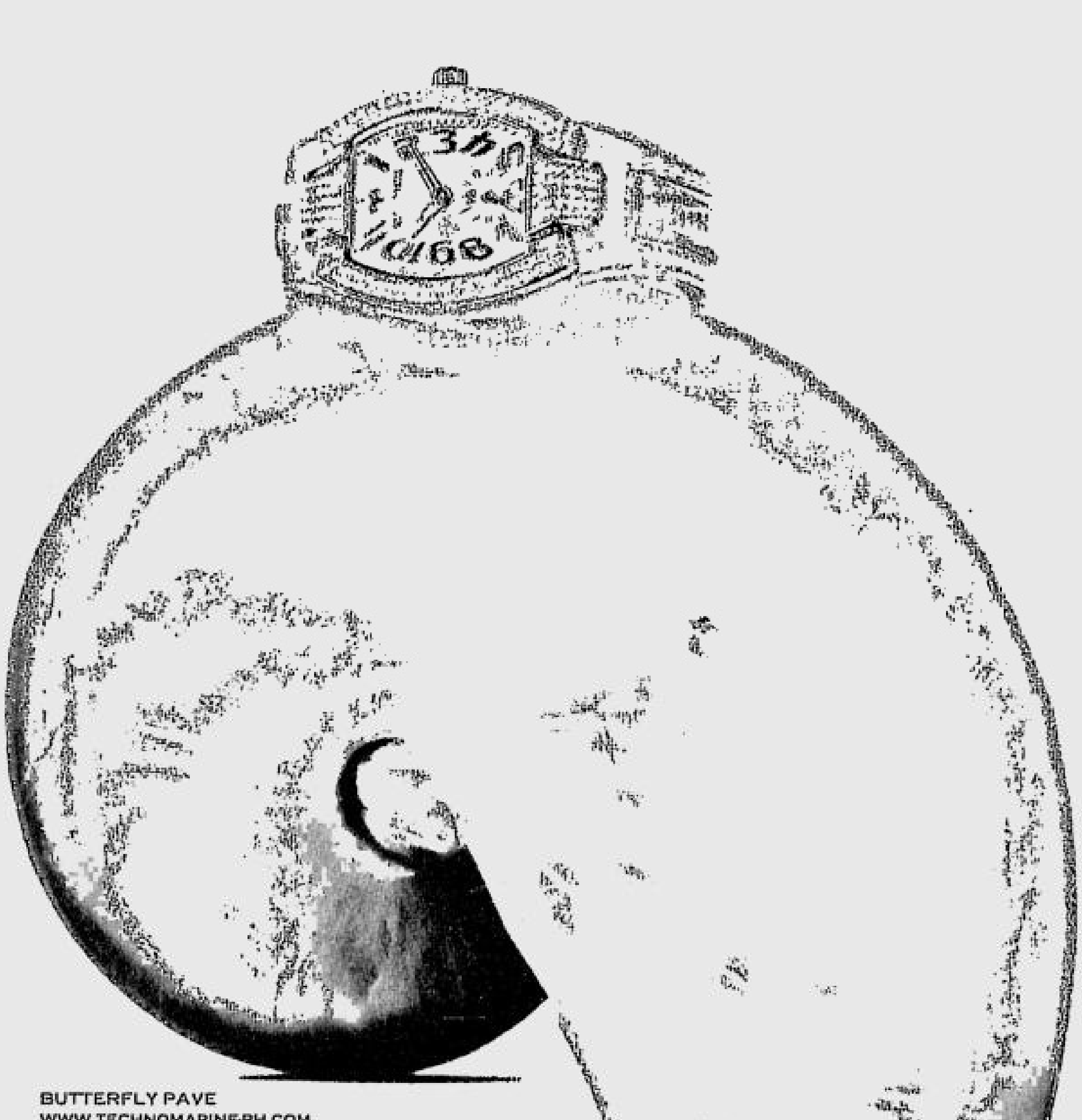

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LifeStyle

Easy-to-make curtain to brighten up any room

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

CRAFTS

WHETHER you are an experienced sewer or a beginner, you will enjoy making decorative items for your own home. Curtains to dress up windows are a traditional favorite, of course, but they seem difficult to make.

The truth, however, is curtains are easy to do when you know the basics of sewing.

Curtains are often made of lightweight or sheer fabrics. The colors will depend on your taste. There are many types of curtains, like pinch-pleated draperies, bishop sleeve, reverse roll-up shades and tent-flap.

One of the most popular is the hourglass curtain, which got its name from its shape. It is held tautly between sash rods at the top and bottom of the window glass, and then pulled in at the center to create the hourglass shape. You can use tension

EASY-TO-MAKE/ D4

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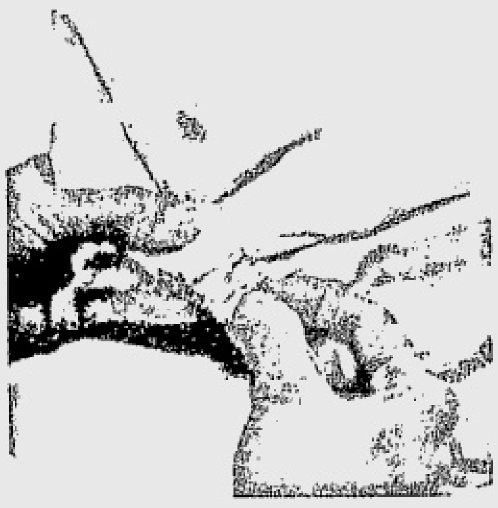
Sino'ng Mabilis sa Beer?
Beer Drinking Contest
featuring
Moonstar88 and NTWINE Band
September 27

SM City NORTH EDSA
6pm
Open Parking B

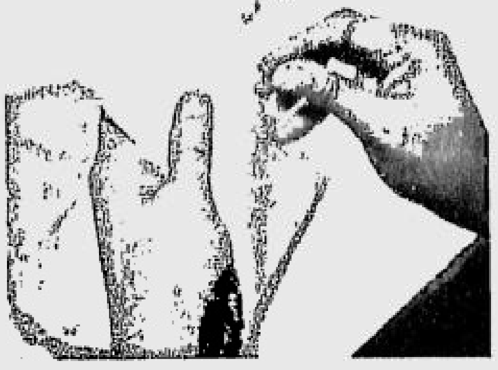
1 **TO** make a fabric rosette, prepare a 72" (height) x 16" (width) strip of desired fabric. Fold strip in half lengthwise.

2 **GATHER** raw edges and stitch across short ends to round the corners. Trim excess fabric at ends. Then, roll one of the rounded ends tightly to the middle to make center of rosette.



3 **CONTINUE** rolling loosely toward opposite end, tacking gathers together with needle and thread.

4 **SHAPE** "petals" with your hands. Hand-tack rosette in place.



5 **MAKE** a tieback for rosette by preparing a 16" x 16" strip of desired fabric. Fold it in half. Insert buckram (*pelon*) between the folded fabric and stitch at the end. Set aside.

all i want is in
MYGLOBE
marvelmania

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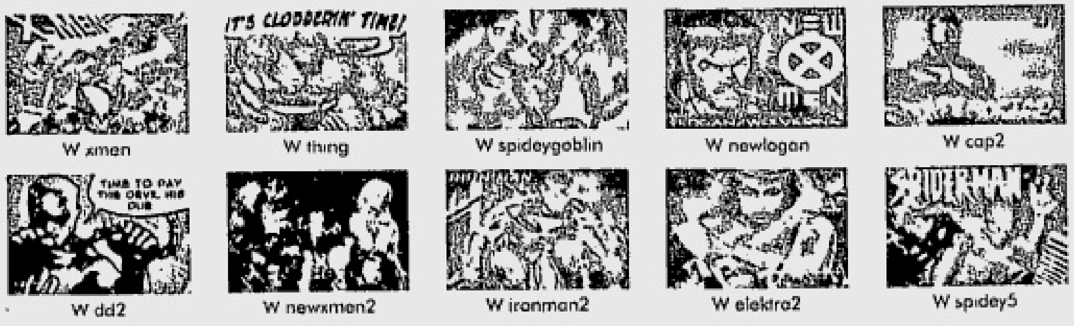
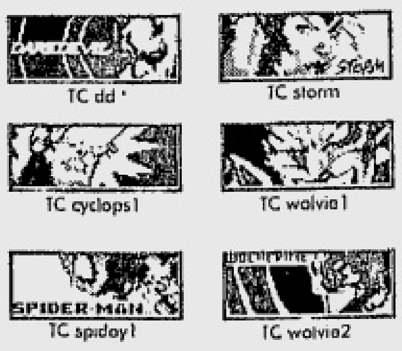


TEXT CARDS



ICONS

L angel
L daredevil
L torch
L storm
L rogue
L cyclops1
L spidey1
L wolvie1
L cyclops2
L spidey2
L wolvie2
L wolvie3

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30 Nintendo Game Boy Advance units and 4 Nokia 3650 phones up for grabs!

Promo Period Sept. 13 - Oct. 12, 2003.

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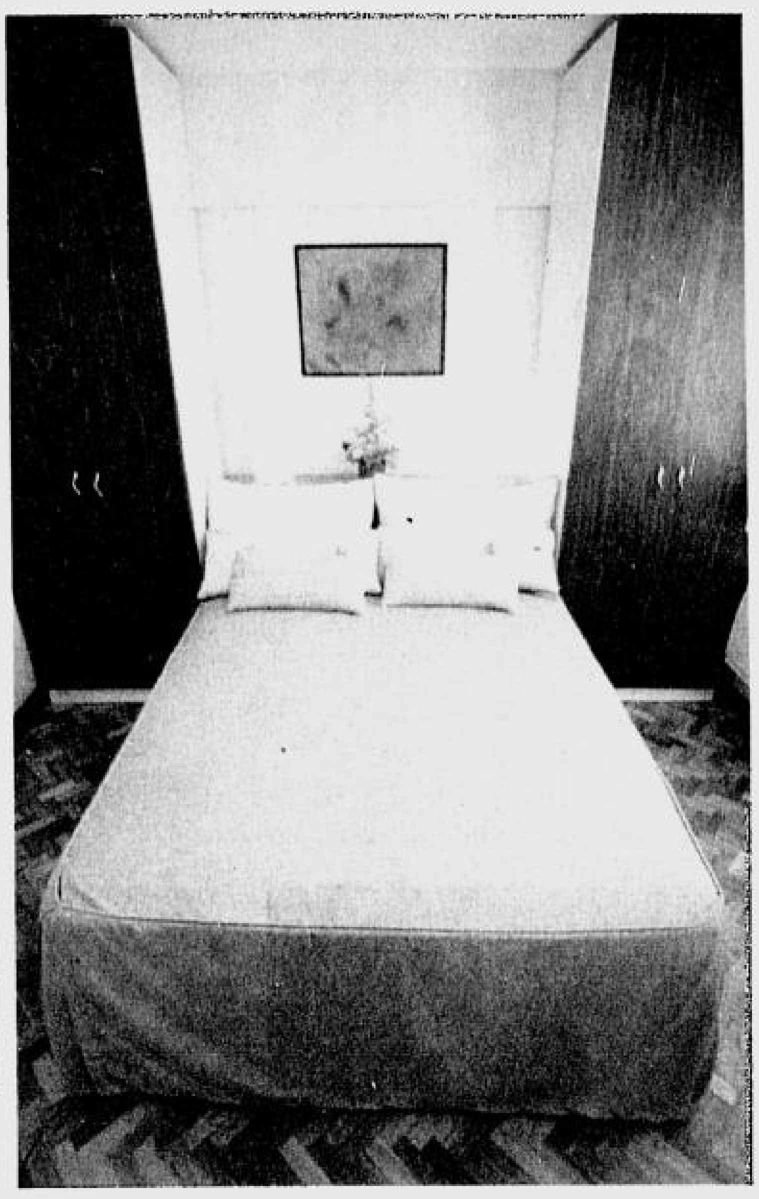
MARVEL ayala

DTI-NCR Permit No. 3768, Series of 2003

making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

THE RIGHT choice of complementary and contrasting elements keeps the small living room from looking cluttered: Red and orange abstract matches the deep-red two-seater sofa, beige curtain echoes the color of the walls and straight metal railings minimize "optical overload." Thanks to a high ceiling and windows that open into an unimpeded corridor, the unit achieves a "light and airy" feel as well.



THE RED painting provides a perfect foil to the moss-green bed cover. The headboard doubles as storage space and ledge, while two identical cabinets provide a sense of symmetry.

Barcelona by the lake

Vista de Lago Villas in Taguig tries to approximate the verve of Catalan design without drowning in ornateness

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

LIVING in a modest-sized condominium unit doesn't mean limiting yourself to such dull space savers as a sofa bed, collapsible table and a handful of stackable monobloc chairs. By limiting the focal points to certain furniture pieces and artworks, the people behind Vista de Lago Villas in Taguig have come up with two model units that look streamlined but far from boring.

The six-story Barcelona, the first of seven Spanish-inspired buildings that are being developed by DMCI Homes (tel. 8883333), is now said to be 60 percent sold. A similar building dubbed as the Andalucia is nearing completion.

Interior designer Regina Consunji turned the walls of the four-bedroom model unit into virtual canvases by limiting the shades to either off-white or beige. She then hung several abstracts she herself painted that either match or contrast with the living room sofa, bedroom curtains and bed covers. So as not to break the continuity, the beige living room curtains match with the color of the walls.

An acrylic painting in red and orange draws attention to the dark red two-seater in the living room. A similar abstract also in red, however, contrasts with the moss green bed cover in the master bedroom. The look is decidedly minimalist, with the bed's headboard doubling as both storage space and ledge. Two identical cabinets frame the bed, thus providing the master bedroom with a sense of symmetry.

"The artworks are limited to abstracts that appeal to both genders," says Consunji. "Everyone has his or her own interpretation of the meaning behind an abstract piece."

Apart from several upholstered beige dining room chairs with red and fuchsia floral prints, there are striped curtains and bedsheets. A bedroom's color scheme, of course, shows the user's supposed gender.

The boy's bedroom upstairs, for example, has matching striped bed cover and curtains in various shades of blue that echo the blue gray walls.

Unisex

The same can't be said of the other bedroom. Despite Consunji's use of varying shades of yellow and orange, the bedroom has a unisex appeal. Obviously the room is designed for a child.

"Blue and yellow are quite versatile," she says. "Depending on how they're used and combined, these colors can cater to almost all age brackets and genders."

Of course, such versatile shades have their limitation. Such elements as furniture, accent pieces, artworks and even the fabrics' prints still play a great deal in determining the look and mood of each bedroom.

Credit should also go to in-house architect Rina Soriano. The Barcelona, with its curved balusters and tiled eaves, exudes a Spanish flavor outside. Inside each of the four-bedroom unit, however, the architect minimizes the clutter by sticking to straight, unfuzzy lines.

Soriano, for example, chose straight metal railings over curved balusters for the stairs to avoid what she calls an "optical overload." The living room's high ceiling, which goes all the way up to the second floor, just beneath the roof, allows light to come in.

Consunji made use of a suspended light, which dangles all the way down to the first floor, to emphasize the ceiling's height. Such an element has a practical side to it as well. Should the family need additional space in the future, it can give up the high ceiling to make way for a fifth bedroom.

"There's enough room for expansion," says Alfredo Austria, DMCI Holdings' vice-president for business development, of Vista de Lago's four-bedroom affair. "Each unit is structurally sound to handle the additional weight."

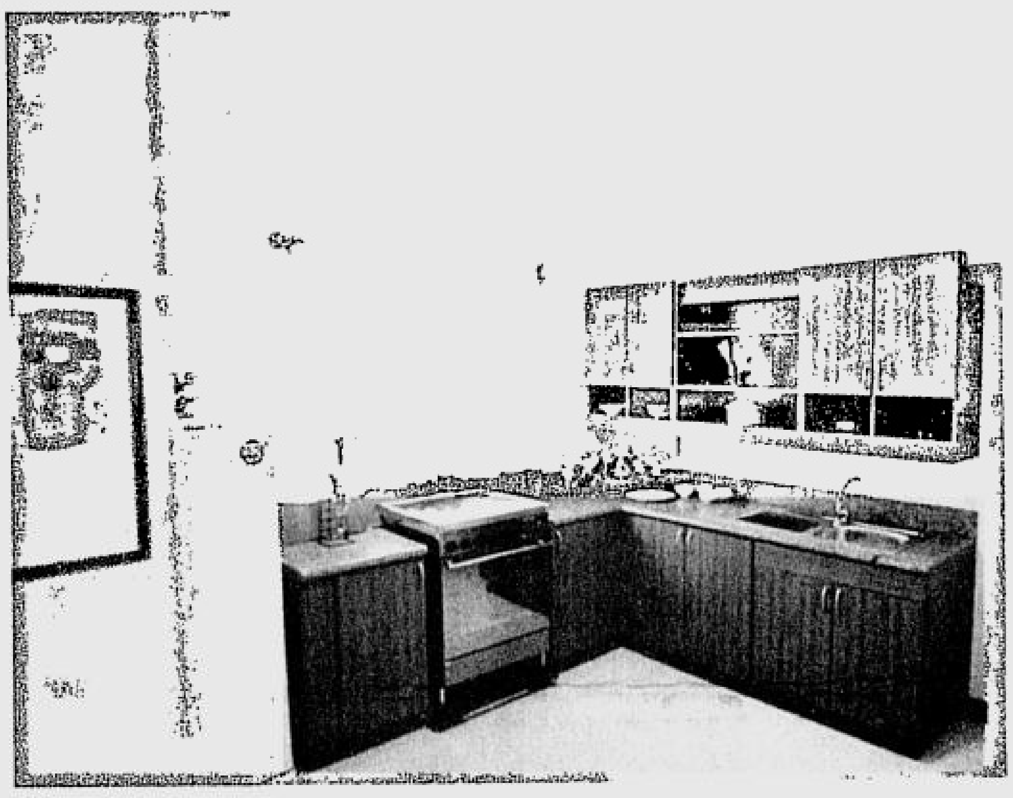
DMCI Homes is also behind Lakeview Manors, an earlier development also in Taguig composed of several condominium buildings. Unlike some developers, DMCI Homes prides itself at managing the properties it develops.

Sixteen of Barcelona's 64 units located on the top floor are two-story, four-bedroom affairs (P2.6 million) each with a total floor area of 95 square meters. Each of the four-bedroom unit comes with an individual balcony on its second floor. The rest are two-bedroom units each measuring 48 square meters (P1.3 million).

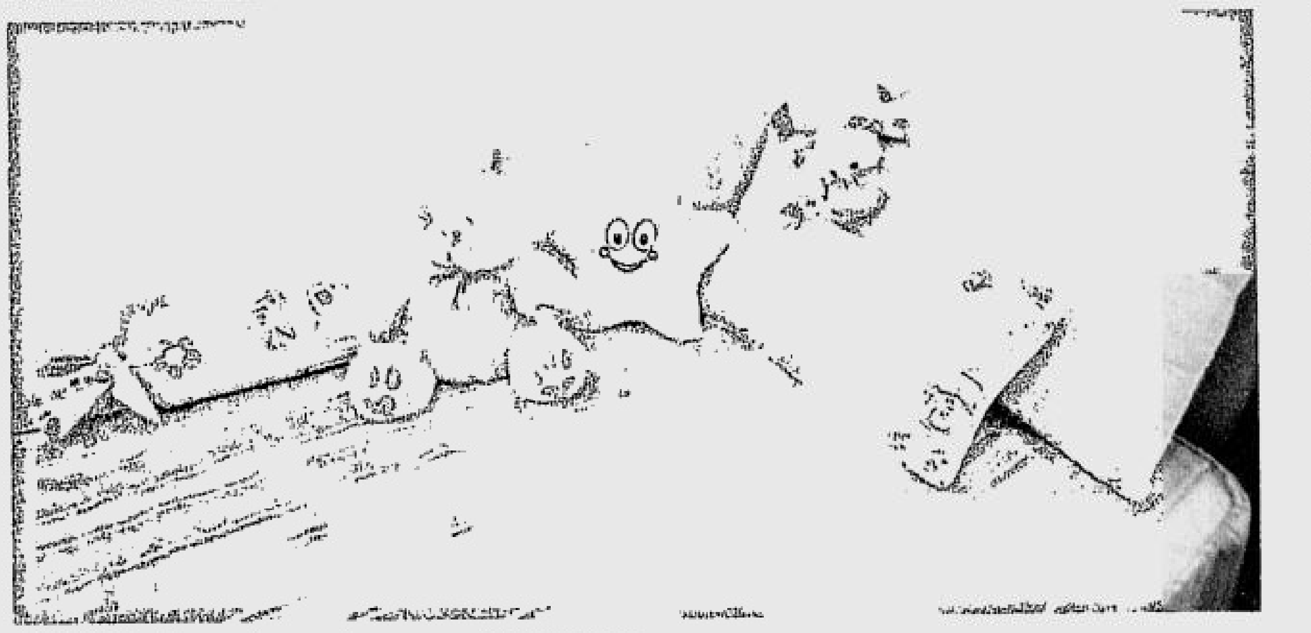
"Filipinos (view) Spanish architecture as (something) more ornate and set within a sprawling garden," says Tet Abad Santos, general manager of DMCI Homes. "We have considered and included such expectations in Vista de Lago without forgetting to include modern and family-oriented features present in our previous projects."

As its name implies, Vista de Lago also overlooks Laguna de Bay. Like Lakeview, it's also a gated community with its own clubhouse, restaurant, swimming pool, biking and jogging paths, manicured gardens and ample parking areas. The light and airy mood evident indoors also extends to the outdoors.

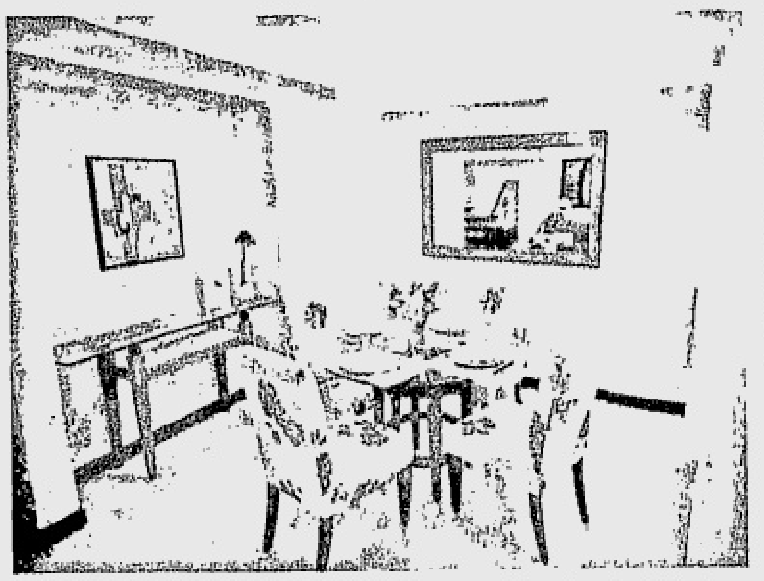
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



YOU can never go wrong with beige walls and wood-veneered kitchen cabinets. The kitchen window is a premium in condo living.



SHADES of yellow and orange in a younger child's bedroom



GLASS-TOPPED tables are ideal "space savers" as they don't look as solid as their wood or wrought iron counterparts. The mirror adds an illusion of depth to the dining room, while the abstract artwork blends seamlessly with the "genderless" showcase.

Benitez is lone 2003 Mother Teresa awardee

CIVIC leader Helena Z. Benitez will receive the Mother Teresa Award at 4 p.m. on Sept. 30, at the Carlos P. Romulo auditorium of RCBC Plaza. Vice President Teofisto Guingona will be the guest speaker while Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco will give welcome remarks.

GOINGS ON

PARENTING WORKSHOP. The Little Gym will conduct its parenting congress titled "The Next Step: Towards Healthy Bodies, Active Minds, Happy Hearts" tomorrow, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Asian Institute of Management conference center. Call 8151735/8151779.

HOMECOMING. Graduates of the University of the East Manila and Caloocan holds a grand alumni homecoming tomorrow, 4 p.m. at Club Filipino, Club Filipino Avenue corner Eisenhower, San Juan, Metro Manila. Call 7358557 or 7355471 local 310/381, fax 7358562 or e-mail alumni@ue.edu.ph.

TRADE FAIR. The Association of Negros Producers holds the 16th Negros Trade Fair dubbed "Transcend" until Sept. 28 at Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, open daily at 10 a.m.-9 p.m. More than 60 booths offer a wide range of products from Negros.

BINGO BONANZA. The St. Theresa's College HS 1979 presents Bingo Ka Na Ba? on Sept. 28, 1 p.m., at STC QC High School Grounds, D. Tuazon Avenue. Call Arianne Javier at 7319193/0917-8156656 or Carol Toledo, 4101169/0916-3102720.

FASHION SHOW. Century Park Hotel and Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines hold the fourth season of Century in Fashion until Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m., at Atrium Lounge of Century Park Hotel. Call 5288888.

ANNIVERSARY. The Archdiocese of Manila Campus Ministry marks its silver anniversary with a homecoming event, "Gabi ng Parangal" on Oct. 7. It will start with a Mass at 4:30 p.m. at Manila Cathedral. Dinner and program will follow at 6-9 p.m. Call 7353390/ 7366588/ 736-6589.

SPECIAL OFFER. Citibank cardholders who avail of a VIP membership at Gold's Gym can use their credit cards to enjoy 0 percent interest on a 12-month install-

BENITEZ/ D3

MAY birthday celebrants and Assumption High School Golden Jubilarians Buda de Leon-Samson, Nening Pedrosa-Manahan, Tessie Lopa-Lacson, Ligaya Na Azada and Sonia Reyes-Mateo recently hosted a well-attended dinner preceded by a mass at the Azada residence in New Manila. Also present were silver jubilarians Nanoy Lopa-Reyes, Marivic Lopa-Silva, Babita Anido and Anya Escobar Hofileña.

Benitez is lone 2003 Mother Teresa awardee

From page D2

ment term. Call 9959999.

REUNION. BPI Foundation Inc. will hold a grand reunion of BPI Science awardees from 1989 to the present. Call 8169390/8455533 or e-mail bpi-scienceawardees@yahoogroups.com.

SHOW. The Wonderful Christmas Gift and Food Show and The Great Christmas Toy Show are slated on Dec. 17-21 at SM Megatrade Hall 2. Call Neo Trade Christmas Show hotline at 8129099/8127450 or e-mail neotrade1@yahoo.com.

SEMINARS. Businessmaker Academy will hold Personal Money Management with Introduction to Investing on Oct. 3; Personal Image Enhancement and Personality Development for Women, Oct. 17 or 31; Personal Health and Stress Management and Effective Decision-Making and Problem Solving Techniques, by special arrangement. Courses will be held at Suite 1503A West Tower, PSE Building (Tektite), Ortigas Center. Call 6874445/6873416/6874645.

TRADE FAIR. Photoworld Manila trade fair will be held on Feb. 25-March 1, at Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati. Workshops will be held at the Asian Institute of Management. Call 8435341/8137420.

CAMPAIGN. Avon will hold its Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer campaign in October. Five pesos from each lipstick sold during this month will be set aside for a fund to support the PGH Breast Care Center. To launch this campaign, Avon will hold a photo exhibit on Oct. 1-15 at the 4th level of Shangri-La Mall.

ONLINE COURSE. The UP Open University offers its 16-week non-formal online course, Introduction to Electronic Commerce on Oct. 6-25 to January 2004. Call Larry Cruz at (049) 5366010; (049) 5366001 to 6006 local 821 or e-mail fms@upou.org.

FORUM. The Evangelion Foundation Inc. will hold a forum dubbed "Media—Good News or Bad News" on Oct. 4 at Theology room of San Carlos Seminary, Edsa, Guadalupe, Makati. Call 5324566 or e-mail evnglion@i-manila.com.ph.

ANNOUNCEMENT. Globe's board of directors has announced the appointment of Gerry Ablaza Jr. and Gil Genio as board chair and chief executive officer, respectively, for Innove Communications, Inc. effective Oct. 1.

Red Tag Sale

Get big discounts and high value for money.

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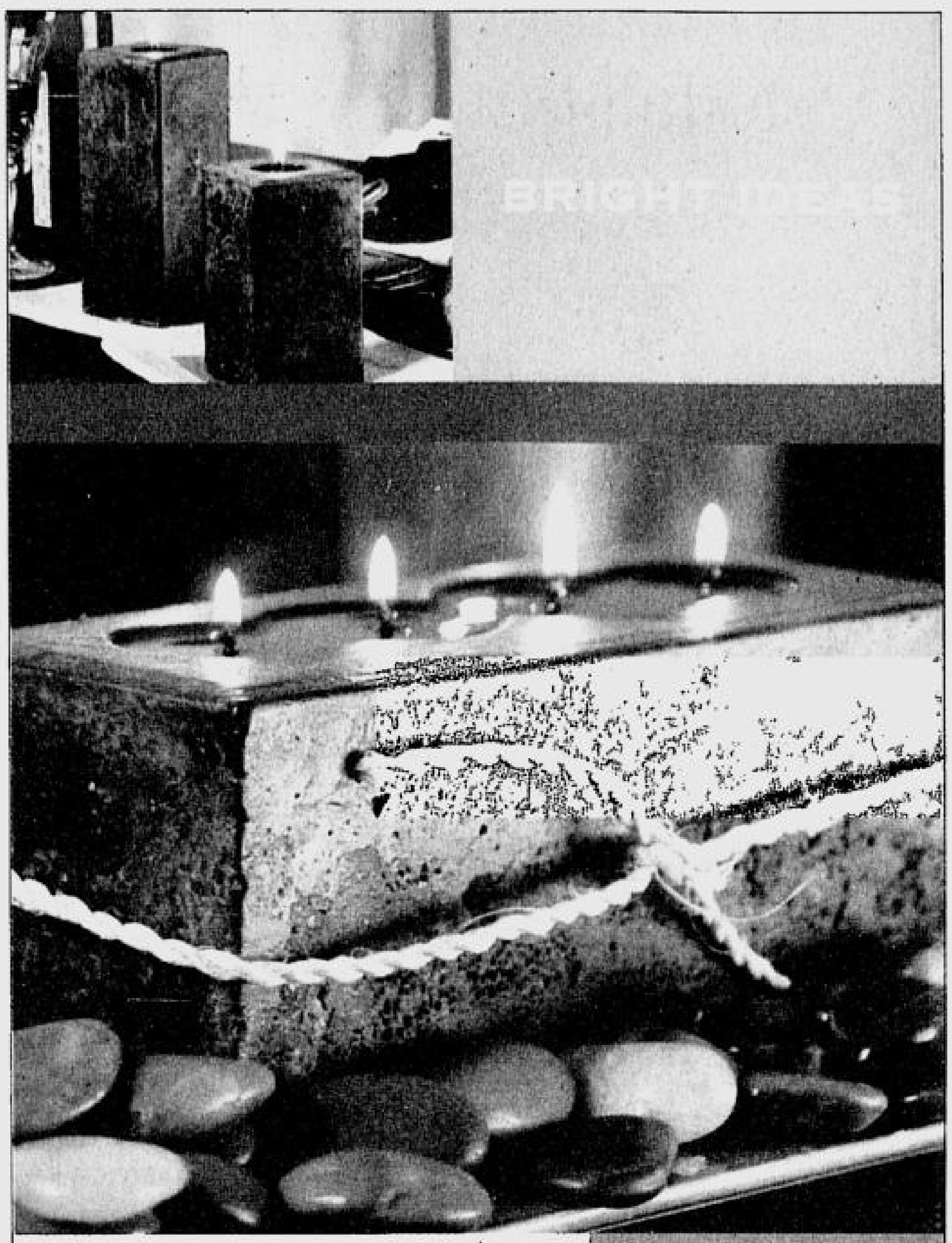

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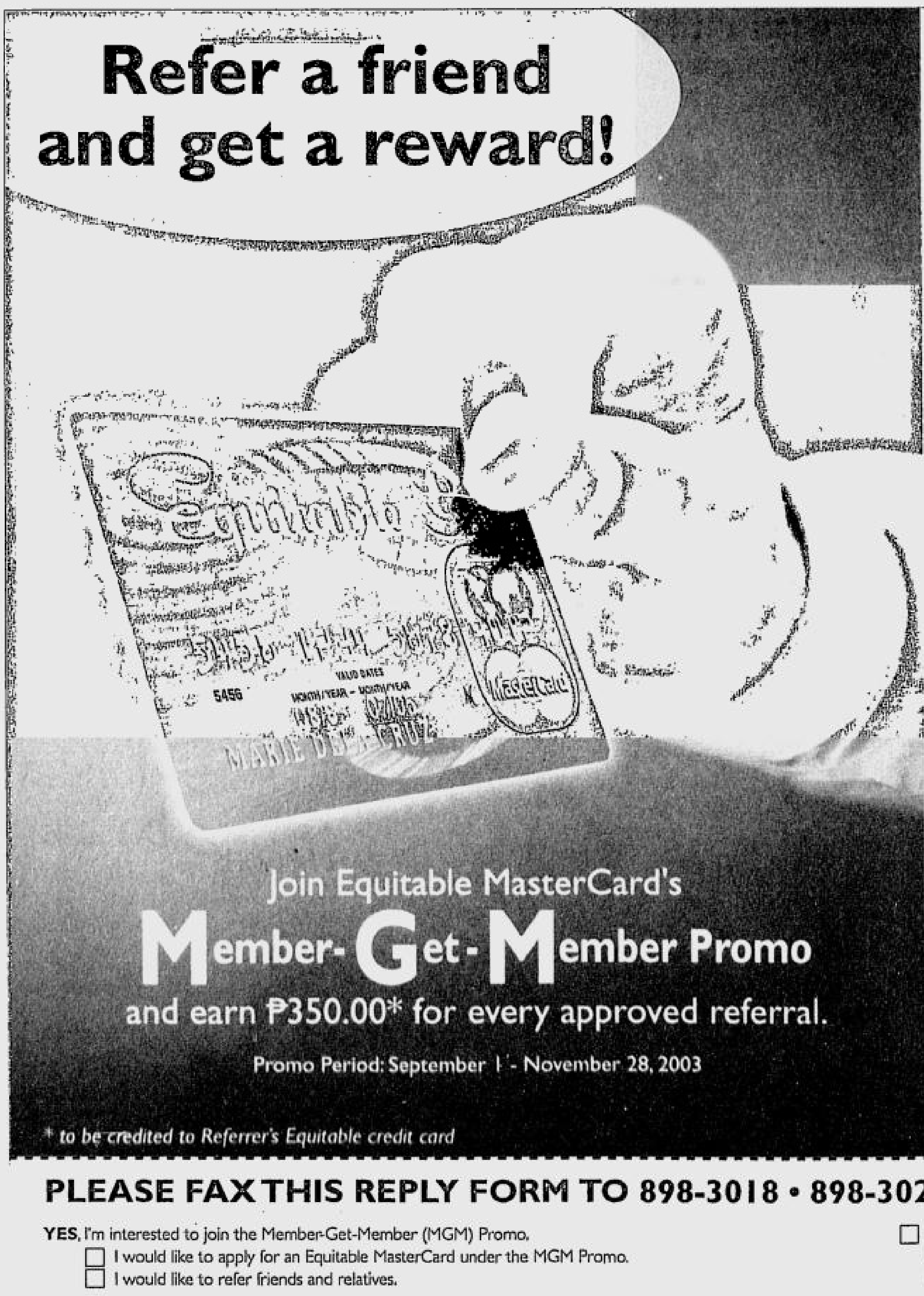
designs

Our Home



Refer a friend and get a reward!

Join Equitable MasterCard's
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and earn ₱350.00* for every approved referral.
Promo Period: September 1 - November 28, 2003

* to be credited to Referrer's Equitable credit card

Promo Mechanics

1. This nationwide Member-Get-Member (MGM) Promotion is open to all Equitable CardNetwork, Inc. Principal cardholders in active status, including Co-branded/Affinity and Corporate cards, which will be referred to hereinafter as the "Referrer". Housecards and tie-up cards are excluded from this promo.
2. Member-Get-Member Promo runs from September 1 to November 28, 2003.
3. To join, the Referrer must refer qualified individuals to apply for an Equitable MasterCard using the specially designed MGM application forms. Original or photocopies of the MGM application forms may be used. For copies of the application form, visit any Equitable PCI Bank or Equitable Savings Bank branch nationwide or download it from the website at www.equitablecard.com. The use of forms other than the MGM application forms will automatically disqualify the Referrer from earning the credits once application is approved.
4. It is important that Referrer indicate his/her name and one (1) Equitable credit card number on the MGM Application Form (see below) before passing it to a relative, friend or colleague for completion.

REFERRER'S USE ONLY

✓ REFERRER'S NAME: ______

✓ CREDIT CARD NUMBER ☐☐☐☐-☐☐☐☐-☐☐☐☐-☐☐☐☐

5. There is no limit to the number of applications / referrals the Referrer can submit during the promo period. All MGM application forms submitted during the promo period will be subject to the normal approval process.
6. Referred applicants must fill out the MGM application form and attach their acceptable proof of income. Applications without proper supporting documents or with incomplete information will not be processed.
7. All MGM application forms must be sent to 4/F, Equitable Card Center, Credit Department, 203 Salcedo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City. Deadline for submission of MGM application forms is on November 28, 2003.
8. In cases of duplicate applications submitted by different Referrers, the credit will go to the Referrer who submitted the application first based on the date of the transmittal forms received by Equitable Card.
9. Referrer gets THREE HUNDRED FIFTY PESOS (PhP350.00) for every one (1) approved PRINCIPAL card application under the MGM promo, which shall be automatically credited to his/her Equitable Card account as indicated in the MGM application form. Approved Principal card applicants under the MGM promo will be entitled to one (1) Free extension card but will NOT earn PhP350.00 for the Referrer.
10. The credit amount shall be reflected on the Referrer's Equitable Card statement and may be used for regular card purchases or to offset purchases made on the card. Existing terms and conditions with merchants shall apply.
11. In case of dispute, the decision of Equitable CardNetwork, Inc. with concurrence of DTI shall be considered final.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2185, Series of 2003

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YES, I'm interested to join the Member-Get-Member (MGM) Promo.
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☐ Fax me a copy of the MGM Application Form at no. ______
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☐ I want to know more about the MGM Promo, please call me at any of the following telephone nos.
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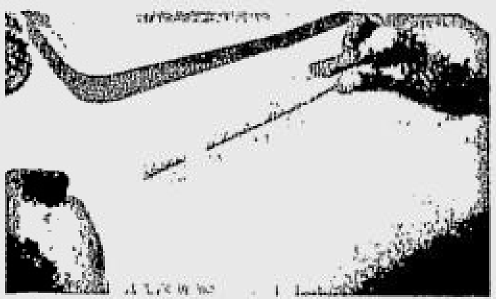
Office No. ______ Mobile No.

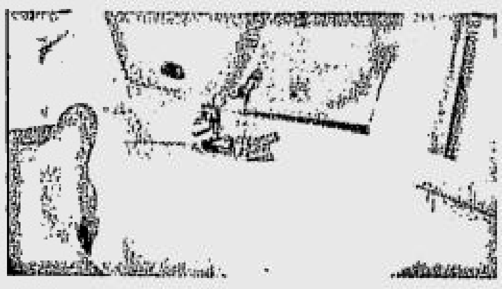
Printed Name: ______
Last Name First Name Middle Initial

Signature: ______ Date:

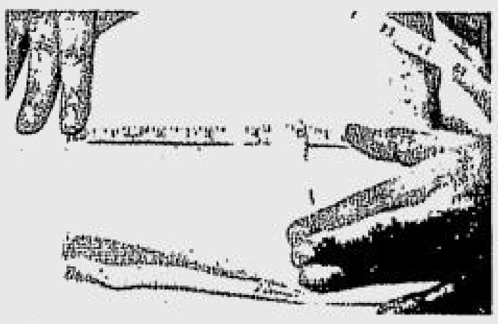
For additional MGM applications forms, visit any Equitable PCI Bank or Equitable Savings Bank branch nearest you or download it from **www.equitablecard.com**



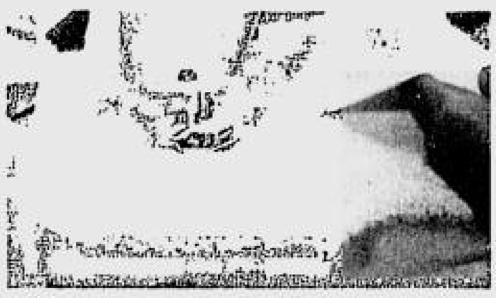
6 **TO** make the curtain, you will need about three yards (in length) of desired fabric with 60" width. Fold the side panel 1 ½" lengthwise.



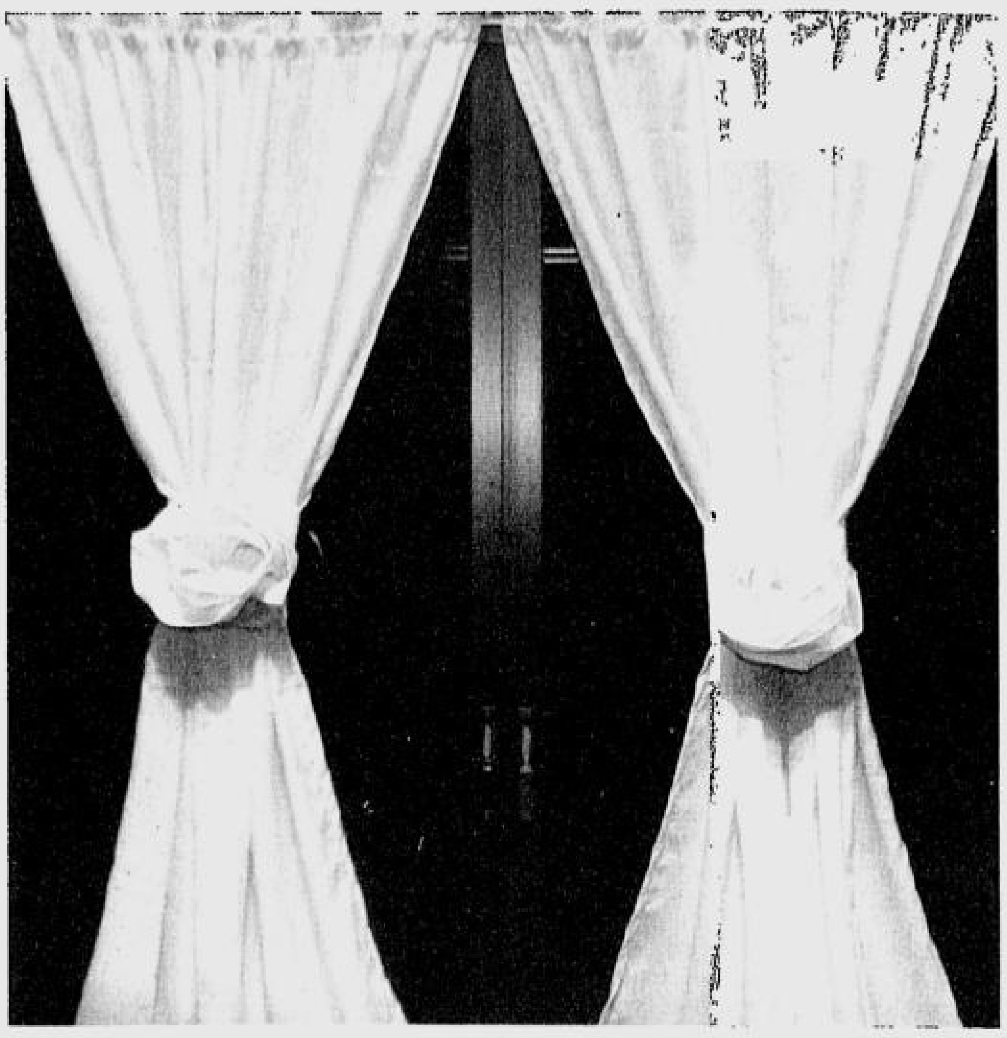
7 **STITCH** the side panel and do the same on the other side panel.



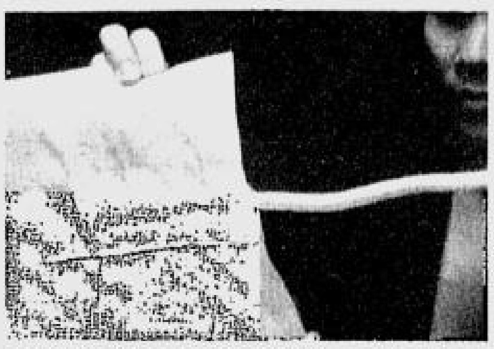
8 **THEN,** create a five inch-fold on both the top and bottom.



9 **STITCH** the fold.



THE CLASSIC hourglass curtain



10 **INSERT** rod or string onto the pockets and mount curtains. With string or tape measure, pull panel into hourglass shape at midpoint and place the rosettes.

Easy-to-make . . .

From page D1

or sash rods for mounting the curtain.

Because the curtains are kept close to the glass, they are a practical decor for doors. They also work well on windows, allowing more breeze and sunlight to enter a room. For creative accent, rosettes are added to the curtain.

Fabric rosettes are used as accents at the corners of swags and on tiebacks, valances and balloon table toppers. A fairly crisp fabric such as chintz or moiré is needed to make the rosettes stand up. When a soft fabric is used, they take on a draped look.

Singer, the pioneer in sewing machines, gives the simplest steps in making hourglass curtains and rosettes. The 150-year-old sewing machine company, which has become a household name, has a distribution network spanning over 150 countries and consisting of over 1,300 retail stores. Singer and its affiliates have about 58,200 outlets operated by independent dealers and mass merchants, and over 12,000 direct sales agents.

The company also conducts special sewing classes for those who want to learn sewing basics. Call 5271868 and 5279958.

To begin the curtain-making project, you will need a sewing machine, a sheer fabric that you can buy in old, reliable Divisoria, pins, rods or thick cord for mounting curtains.

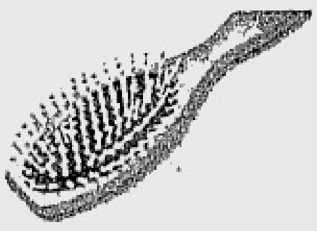
For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Holiday bazaar

THIS Christmas season, bazaars and *tiangges* will be sprouting everywhere, and will have vendors and shoppers alike, guessing on where to go best or join.

Fortunately, "Christmas Bargains @ La Vista" presents a solution to this annual dilemma. For vendors, the ideal premiere location at Maranaw Park, La Vista, Katipunan, QC with a very affordable rental fee (for as low as P2,000 for two days) is absolute bliss. And for shoppers, there's a wide variety of gift items, food and holiday bargains. The event will be on Nov. 29 and 30, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Call 6478441 to 42, 0917-8388664, 0917-8398188 or 0916-5674972.

"My mother was devastated when her hair began to fall out..."



We often forget that hair loss is also suffered by many women throughout the Philippines. Carmela Marquez was lucky that her daughter supported her through the anxiety of hair loss and recommended treatment at Svenson International. Carmela's hair was thinning dramatically so our experts suggested the Svenson *Non-Surgical Hair Integration Method.* This added more hair to Carmela's thinning areas and gave her hair a naturally thicker appearance.

If you're like Carmela Marquez and you feel embarrassed and depressed by thinning hair, call Svenson International today and book your FREE CONSULTATION where we will attend to all your hair loss and baldness concerns. Our friendly experts will show you some of our viable solutions to your hair loss problems.

Woman AT Svenson

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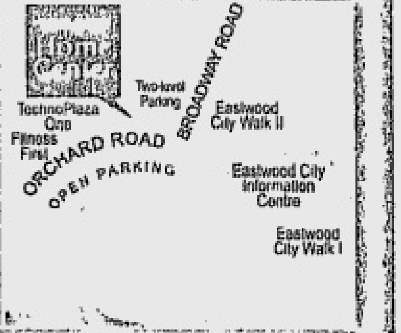

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FREE Interactive Workshops:

SEPT. 30 - Free flower arranging lessons by Designer Blooms (3 pm- 4 pm)
Free polymer clay demo by Pottery Exchange (4:30 pm - 5:30 pm)
OCT. 1 - Free pottery wheel demo by Pottery Exchange (4 pm - 5 pm)
OCT. 2 - Free workshop on bath & body care plus free foot spa treatment by Bodyfood Bath & Body Products (4 pm - 5:30 pm)
• ALL WORKSHOPS HAVE LIMITED SLOTS ONLY.

For reservations or details, call 867-8913 to 17

SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION

The San Miguel Music Festival
at The Podium

Ryan Cayabyab, host

September 26, Friday
9pm - 10pm
A Cappella Friday
Folk and pop music for unaccompanied voices
The San Miguel Master Chorale
Jonathan Velasco, conductor

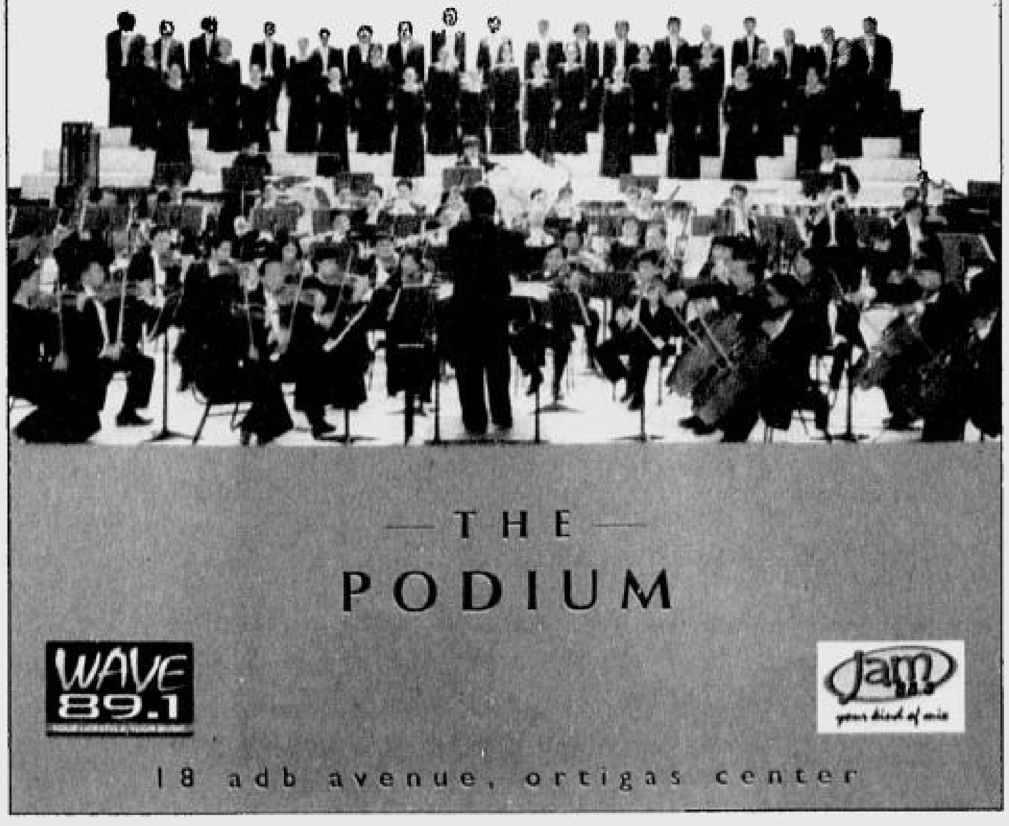
September 27, Saturday
9pm - 10pm
Lambingan
Love songs through the ages from all over the world
The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra
Arnel Feliciano, conductor

September 28, Sunday
5pm - 6pm
Symphony for Kids
Orchestral music featured in animated films and other movies
The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra
Arnel Feliciano, conductor

October 4, Saturday
9pm - 10pm
Oktoberfest
Waltzes, polkas and marches by Strauss and other German composers
The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra
Arnel Feliciano, conductor

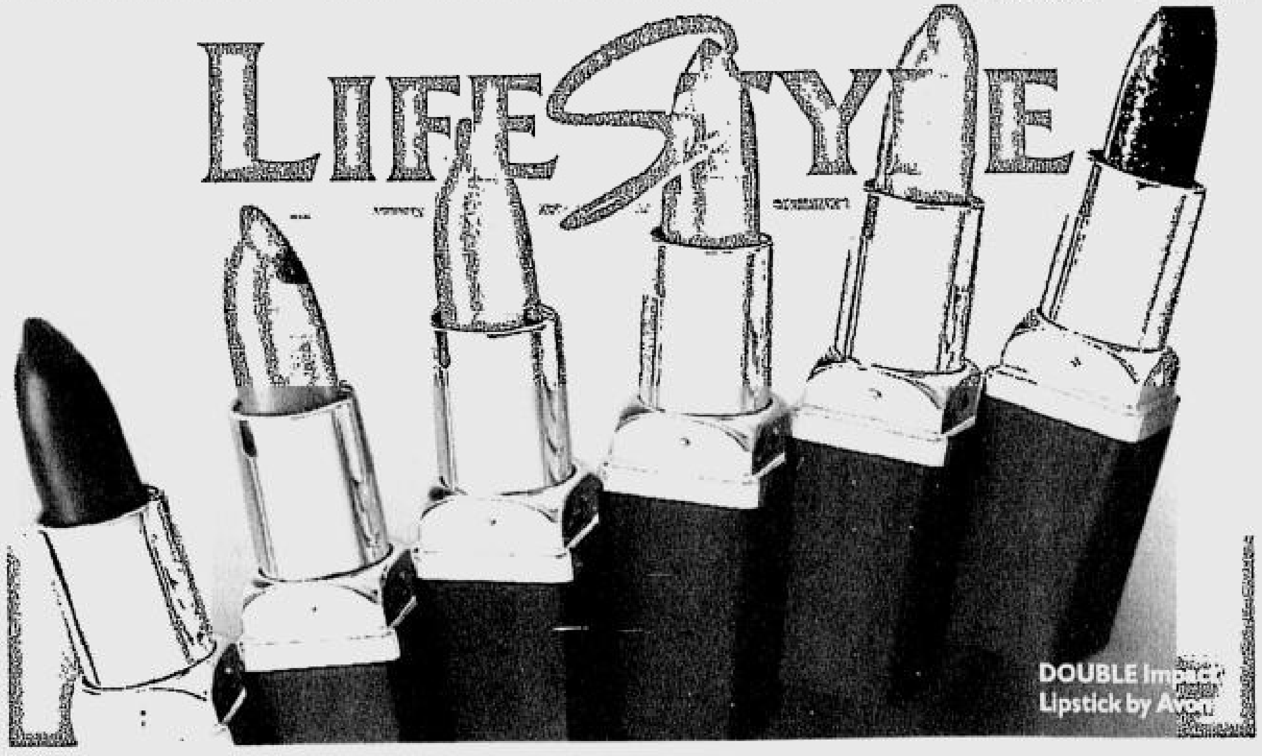
October 5, Sunday
5pm - 6pm
The Songs of Ryan Cayabyab
Songs of multi-awarded composer arranged for orchestra and choir
The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra
The San Miguel Master Chorale
Ryan Cayabyab, conductor

THE SAN MIGUEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
THE SAN MIGUEL FOUNDATION FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
THE SAN MIGUEL MASTER CHORALE



THE PODIUM
WAVE 89.1
Jam 88.3 your kind of mix
18 adb avenue, ortigas center

LifeStyle


DOUBLE Impact Lipstick by Avon

New beauty breakthroughs

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THERE has been a downpour of beauty breakthrough products this past month. All brands I will mention in today's column are very affordable, too. They deliver without denting the pocket!

Avon. They have three star products that are sure to make readers go crazy. For starters, Cellu Sculpt lotion (P499) takes one full inch off your thighs in four weeks and eliminates cellulite significantly. Thighs and buttocks feel firmer as well as smoother. And you only apply it once a day!

Double Impact lipsticks (P370) are pigment-rich, glide right on, don't dry lips despite the semi-matte finish and, best of all, are gel-based, so they last while not feeling heavy.

I got all six shades of the lipstick, but the universal colors (meaning they go with any color clothing and skin tone) are: Cocoplum (browny mauve à la Spice lipliner), Bronzette (caramel brown) and Raisin (deep berry red brown—for those who are looking for a dark neutral color).

The other three shades are tricky: Red (true red with no blue, pink or orange undertones), which can turn orangey on acidic people; Coral (peachy pink) and Rose (medium rosy pink). The last two, I feel, will look great only on those who have peachy or pink tones.

Anew Line and Wrinkle Corrector (P1,200 for the big jar). Sadly, this will be launched November yet, but wow, the sample I had my friend road-test showed results overnight!

All the other press people who tried it were raving about how it erased laugh lines and forehead wrinkles. I saw for myself that it smoothed out dry skin and lines and made skin look dewy as if one had a collagen injection. Watch out for this!

Neutrogena also launched two new lines for oil control and acne-prone skin.

Deep Clean foaming cream wash (not to be confused with the gel as this comes in a tube) literally leaves your skin feeling smooth and silky but matte-finished right after washing. Its forte is oil control. It took me longer to touch up my oily skin, too, which I did only once in six hours as opposed to two or three times with other face washes for oily skin.

However, the cream wash does not remove all makeup, unlike the gel version. It's a good idea to use this on a makeup-free face, and switch to the gel to remove makeup.

NEW/E4

Cellu Sculpt
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Real People. True Stories.

"My job and family keep me 'young on the inside' – on the outside, it's definitely Imedeen! It's not just for your face -- over-all conditioning talaga!"

Zina Rosales,
events planner, mother of two teenagers,
'proud to be vain'

How can you best enjoy a life packed with blessings? For Zina Rosales, it's by staying vibrant and young in spirit – with skin to match. That's where Imedeen comes in. "Imedeen enhances my skin all over, not just on my face... I started to see aging signs on my neck, but with Imedeen it's now supple and even-toned." Unlike creams and lotions, Imedeen works from inside to help strengthen the inner layers of the skin where aging starts. That's why Zina, a self-described 'beauty cynic', looks young and feels confident. As she puts it, "No one notices the age difference when I'm with my young friends!" Imedeen. The Skin Care Tablet.

Ultrasound images of the skin structure: First photo shows photodamaged dermis; second photo shows denser structure which implies better support and ability to hold moisture.

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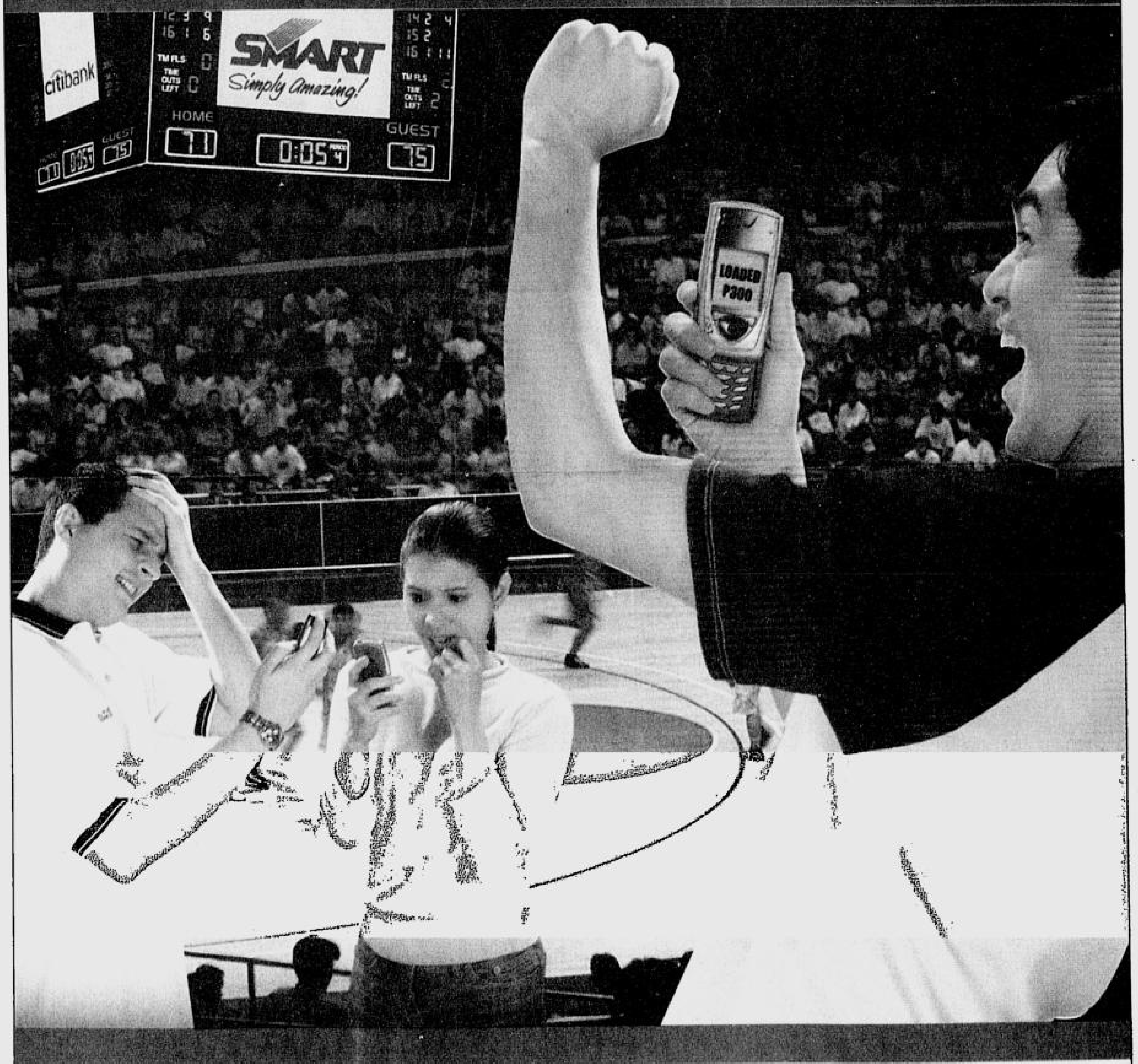

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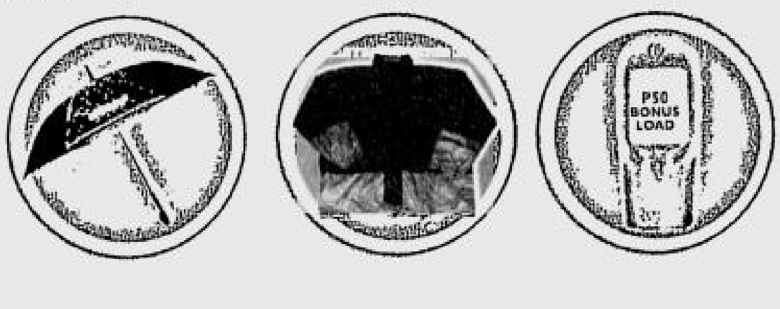

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See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2703. Series of 2003.

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SEPTEMBER 26 FRIDAY [illegible]

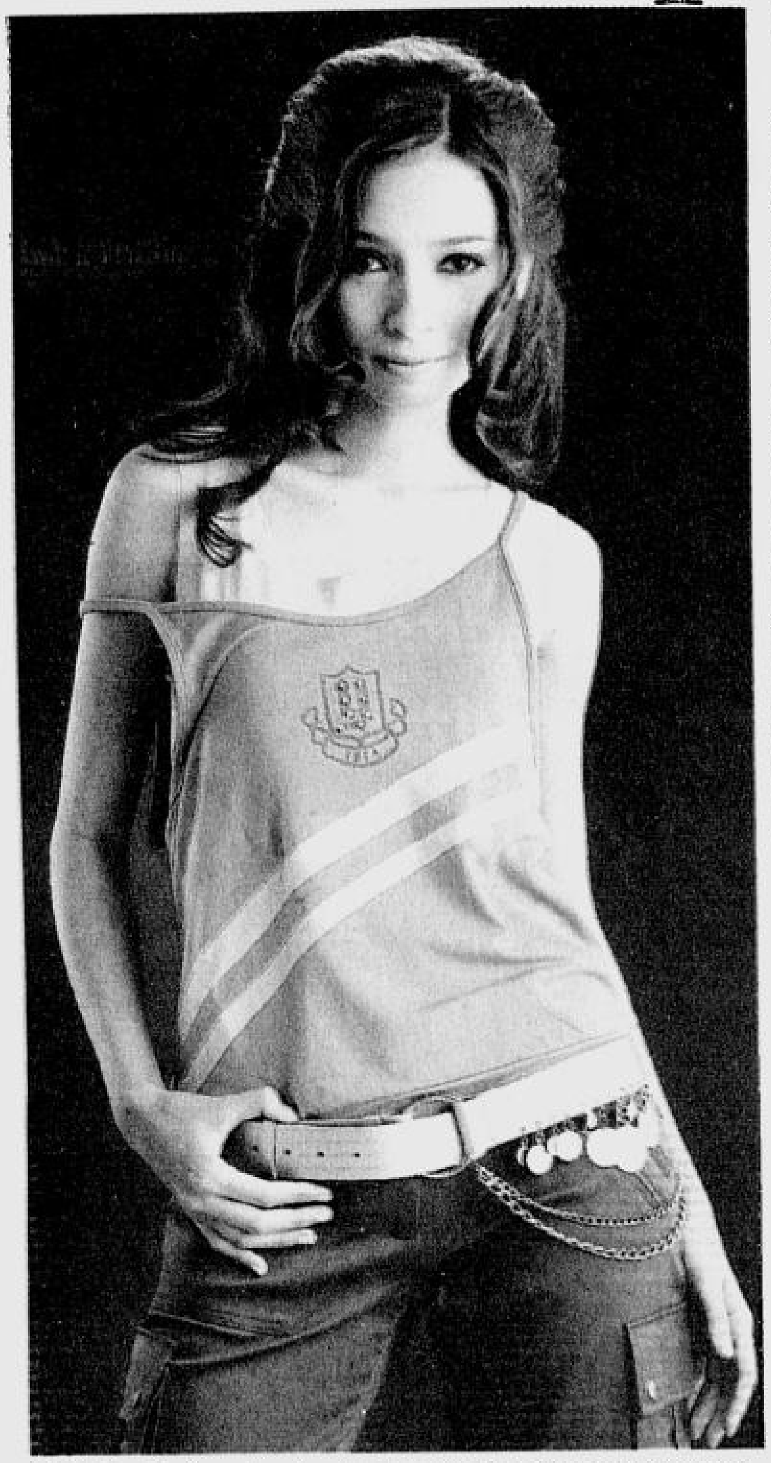
Street wear goes uptown

TWEEDS, the brand synonymous to high-end urban wear, offers a fall collection built on speed, sophistication and stripes—Manila's version of street chic.

The new collection features pulled-up hems and low necklines, tops in flowing silhouettes that keep the shoulders bare, stellar sequins and sporty stripes—all with Tweeds' trademark razor-sharp sleekness.

Also getting attention are micro-minis in bright colors, from revolutionary reds to plush pinks, yelling yellows and go-getting greens.

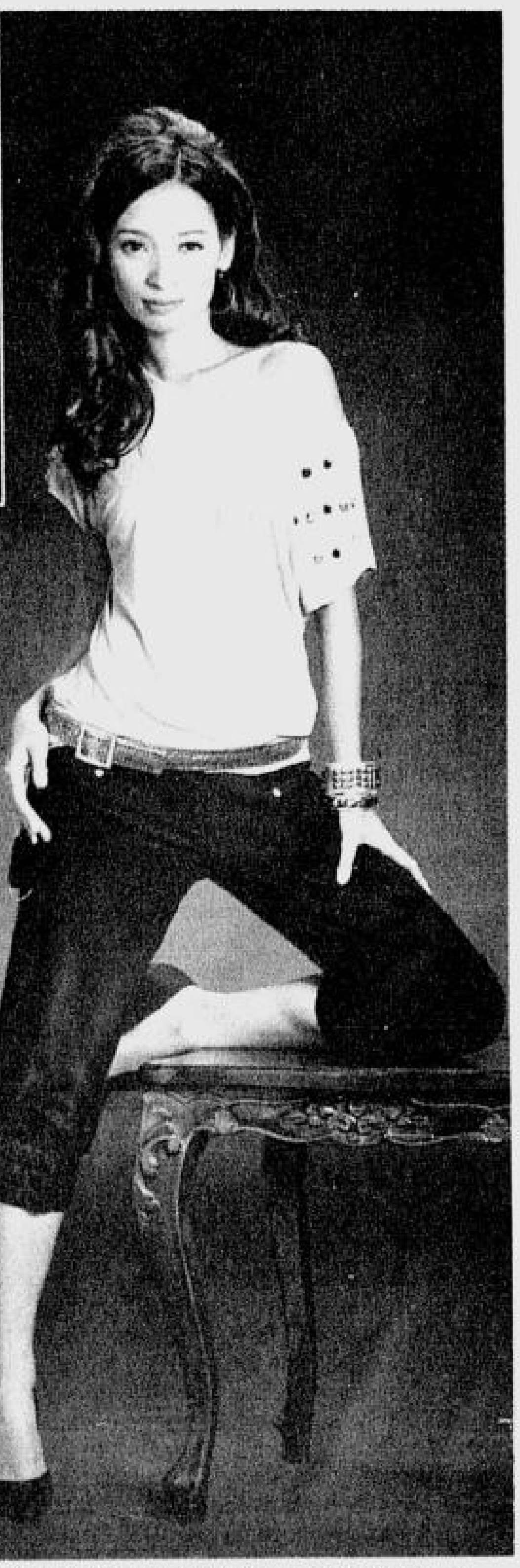
Tweeds is located at Glorietta 1 in Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center and Ayala Center Cebu, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Ermita, SM Megamall and SM Manila.



GREEN and yellow sleeveless top, brown cargo cropped pants, gold belt with palliates and chains

STRIPED mauve top, pink cropped pants, pink belt with multistrand chains

GRAY embroidered blouse with matching halter top, black track pants



GRAY blouse with palliates, black cropped track pants, metallic silver belt, metallic silver cuffs with studs

Three days of women bonding

BEN Farrales

ZONTA Club is holding its Zonta District Conference at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel on Oct. 10-12 with the theme "Together, Let's Make Waves."

The bi-annual conference will gather women of grace, stature and goodwill from all over Southeast Asia. The Philippine delegation will be led by Ma. Imelda "Dandy" Gomez, governor of Zonta District 17.

Sen. Loren Legarda will be the guest speaker on opening night. Retired Justice Cecilia Munoz-Palma will receive a special award from Margit Webjorn, the official representative of Madame Betty Bourdon, Zonta International vice president.

Oct 11 will be a day of fashion and flair as model, mother and fashion consultant Apples Aberin-Sadhwani conducts a beauty-and-wardrobe workshop.

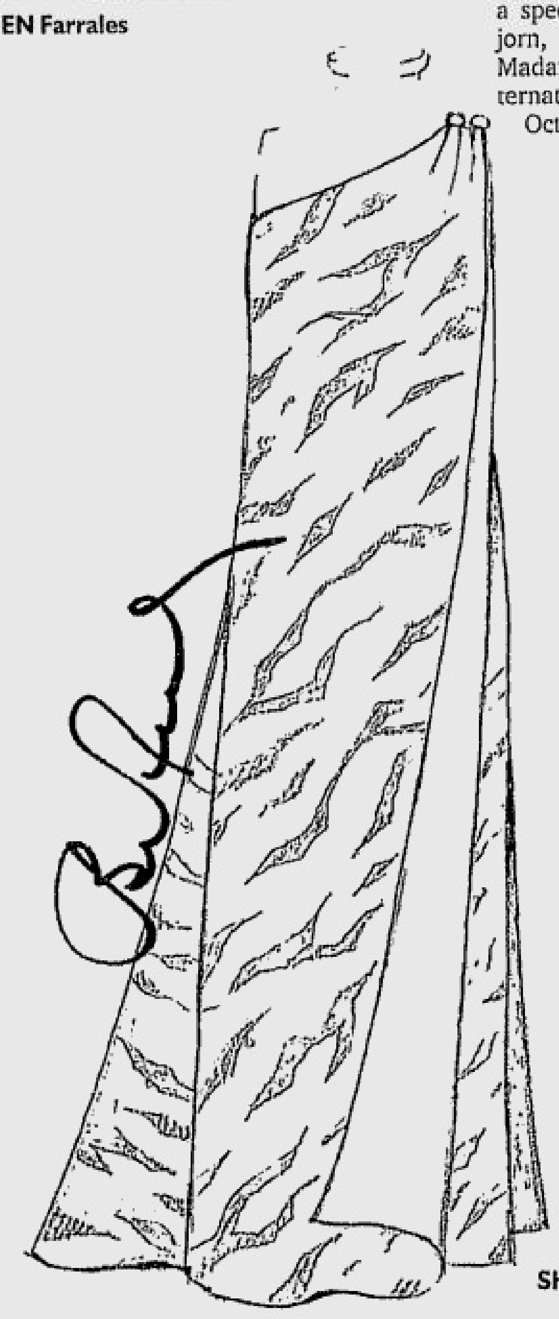
Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman is also set to speak on domestic rights and women empowerment. Other conference workshops will cover topics such as peace and order, domestic rights and the environment.

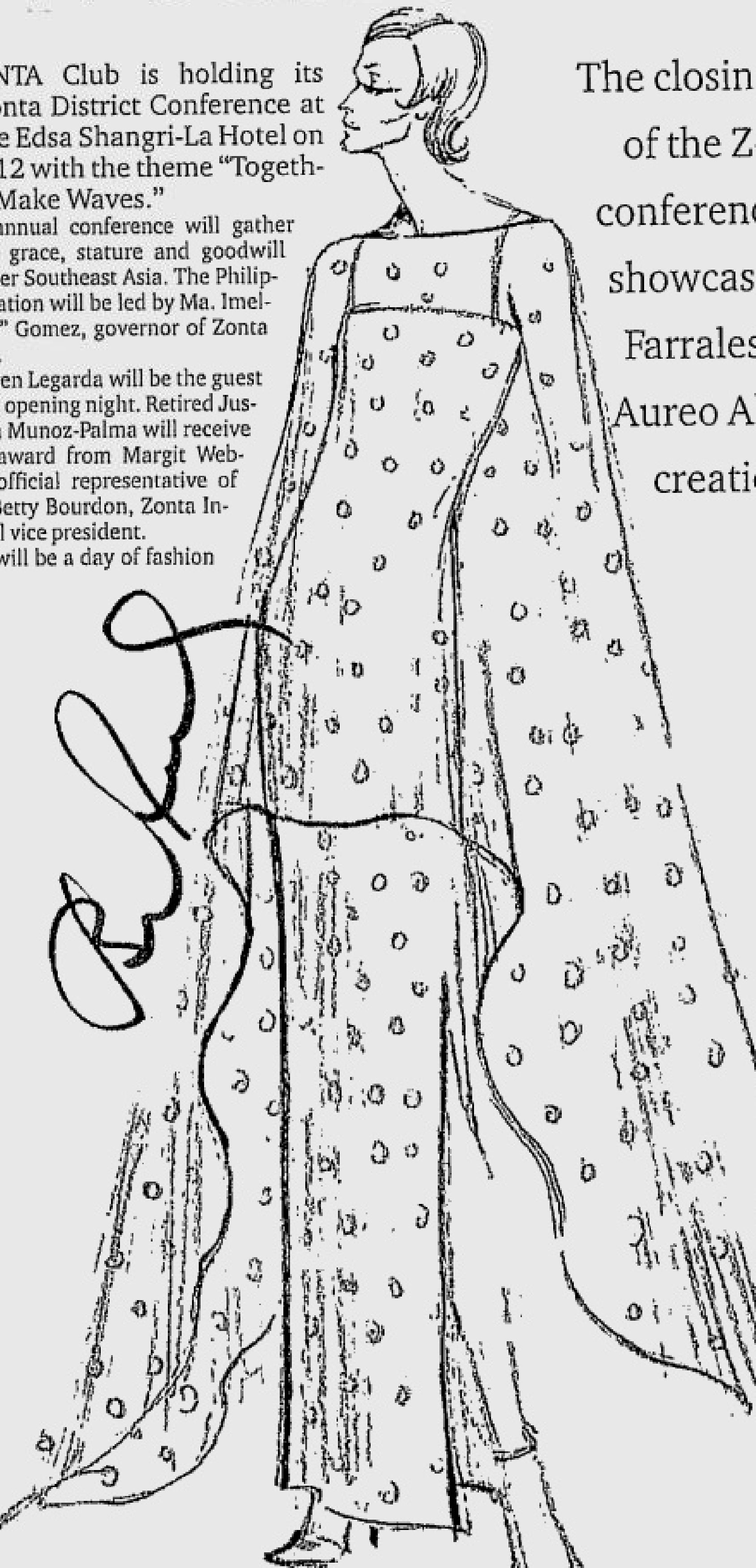
A dinner and dance party will also be held at the Manila Polo Club, as well as awarding ceremonies for outstanding club projects and activities.

Finally, the closing night of the conference will showcase fabulous haute couture pieces by Ben Farrales, Malu Veloso and Aureo Alonzo.

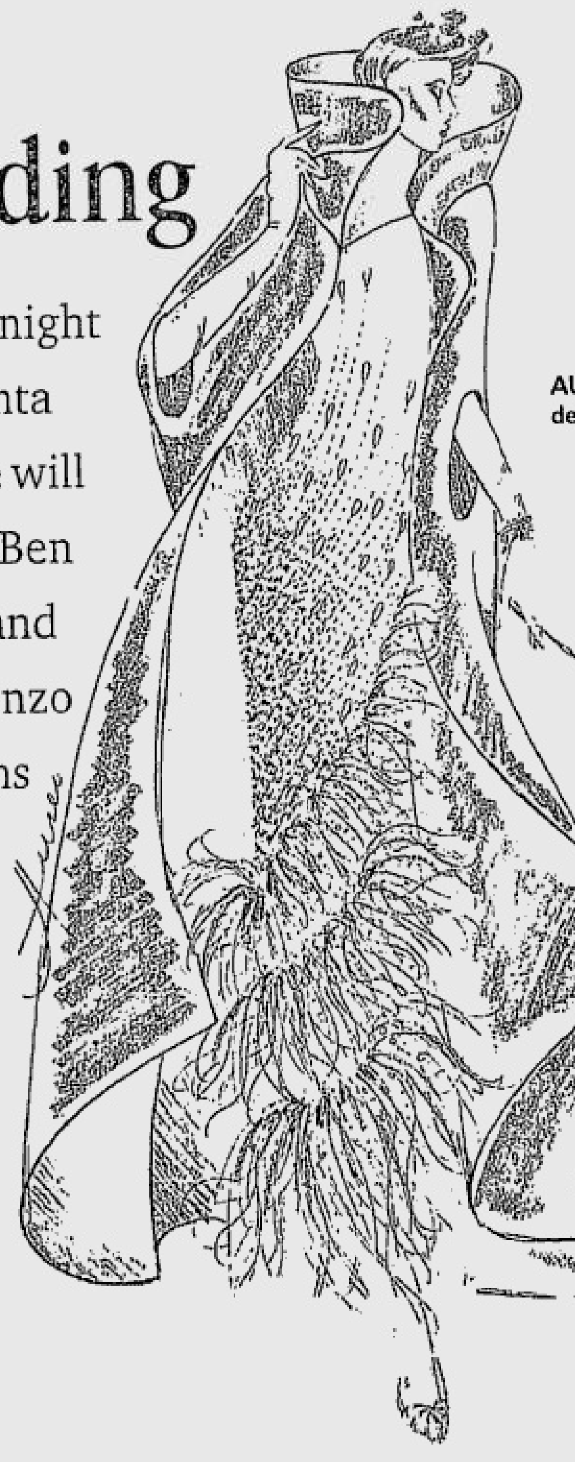
Zonta members may call the District 17 Secretariat at 5355664.

The closing night of the Zonta conference will showcase Ben Farrales and Aureo Alonzo creations





SKETCHES of Farrales' works



AUREO Alonzo's design

Widow can't decide if she'll marry again

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I'm 32 years old, a widow for the past 10 years, with an 11-year-old son. My husband and I had been married for only two years when he was called to the great beyond. He was walking on a sidewalk when a coconut fell on his head. The coconut tree was behind the fence, leaning slightly toward the street. He was rushed to a hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

That's why I am writing you now. I read recently about Pieta in your column, a group for widows. I still feel my grief as a widow but, through the mercy of God, I have survived all the problems that have come my way. And, as you once advised a mother, I also give quality time to my son, shielding him from the pain of not having a father. He is now a sixth grader.

My problem is not financial, since I have a regular job and income from properties inherited from my parents. What I am facing now may not be a problem, but it needs a wise decision.

A widower is now courting me. He is 45 years old, with two sons and one daughter. We have been friends for many years, but I have not really made a decision.

He wants to marry me, and is just waiting for me to say yes. I think I have fallen in love with him, but should I now start a new life?

I am also eager to join Pieta. How can I join? What are their rules, and how much do I pay to be a member?

TROUBLED WIDOW

Before you start a new life, there are some things you should consider. Has he met your son, talked to him as a friend? Does your son respect and like him? Have you also met his children, and do you think you will have a warm relationship with them if you become their stepmother?

You see, family relationships are important. Even if you decide to marry their father, they will likely remain cool and distant because they will still miss their mother. You have many bridges to cross.

But what is really important is to make sure that the widower really loves you, and he doesn't just need a housewife.

Joining Pieta now will surely be good timing for you. It is a spiritual organization of widows, and you will make many friends, aside from experiencing spiritual growth.

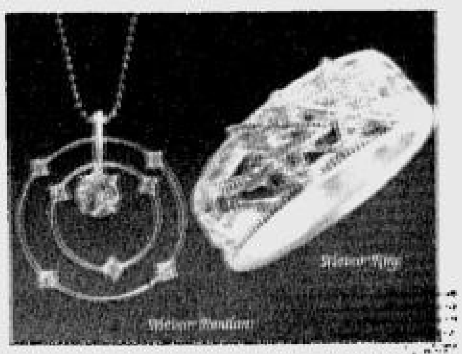
Pieta holds meetings every first Saturday of the month at Sta. Isabel College on Taft Avenue, Manila. Mass is at 7:30 a.m. in the college chapel. Birthday celebrators of each month provide breakfast in the college canteen, as there are no classes on Saturdays.

After breakfast and at the start of the meeting, Fr. Delfin Paulino Felipe, the spiritual director, will give the homily. (They call him Father DP. He was ordained priest in Rome.) Discussions follow.

Membership fee is P50 every month, very affordable, or P600 a year. The group pays P1,000 to Fr. DP, P200 for the use of the canteen (water, etc.) and they give P500 for two students they are sending to school.

Pieta was brought to the Philippines by Madam Mialhe of France in 1961. That's how long we have had Pieta here—42 years. For more information, please contact the Pieta president, Crescencia de Jesus, tel. 5317267. You have something in common with Pieta's founder—a tree also caused her widowhood.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to PO Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City



"METEOR GARDEN" JEWELRY

As a reminder of the most romantic moments of "Meteor Garden," Pinctada and Siuvoni offer the pendant given by Dao Ming Si to Shan Cai while stargazing, and the ring which legend says will let them be together forever. Both the Meteor Pendant and Meteor Ring are crafted from 925 Sterling Silver and set with fine European crystals. Get your very own Meteor Jewelry at all Pinctada and Siuvoni Collections outlets located in SM Megamall, SM Fairview, SM Bacoor, SM Manila, SM Pampanga, SM Bicutan and Festival Supermall.

IAME: GLOBAL EDUCATION AT YOUR DOORSTEP

Recently, the International Academy of Management and Economics (IAME)sealed its affiliation with the Swiss Management Academy. Together with its existing affiliations with the Jones International University (USA), Warnborough University (UK) and the University of Southern Queensland (Australia), this partnership allows IAME to offer hopeful students the opportunity for a truly Global Education. IAME offers a full range ofbusiness courses and high-demand courses like hotel and restaurant management that may be started here in the Philippines and finished in any of IAMEs affiliate schools all over the world. This allows students the advantage of a global perspective and lets them get intense specialist training in their chosen courses. For example, at the University ofSouthern Queensland, students can become Bachelors of IT/ Travel Management and Commerce. They could also choose to further their HRM studies in the Swiss Management Academy.

Recognized by the CHED (Commission on Higher Education) as early as 1989, IAME pioneered the concept of Global Education, which has been consequently emulated by the many of the newer schools today. Located in the heart of Makati, IAME is an incredibly accessible gateway to a world of global opportunities for its students.

IAME's BSBA, MBA, and PhD courses are all accredited and recognized by the CHED. Qualified students enrolling in October have the oppportunity to enroll in Warnborough University's joint MBA or BBA. For inquiries, please contact 896-2355/58 or 0917-8452638.

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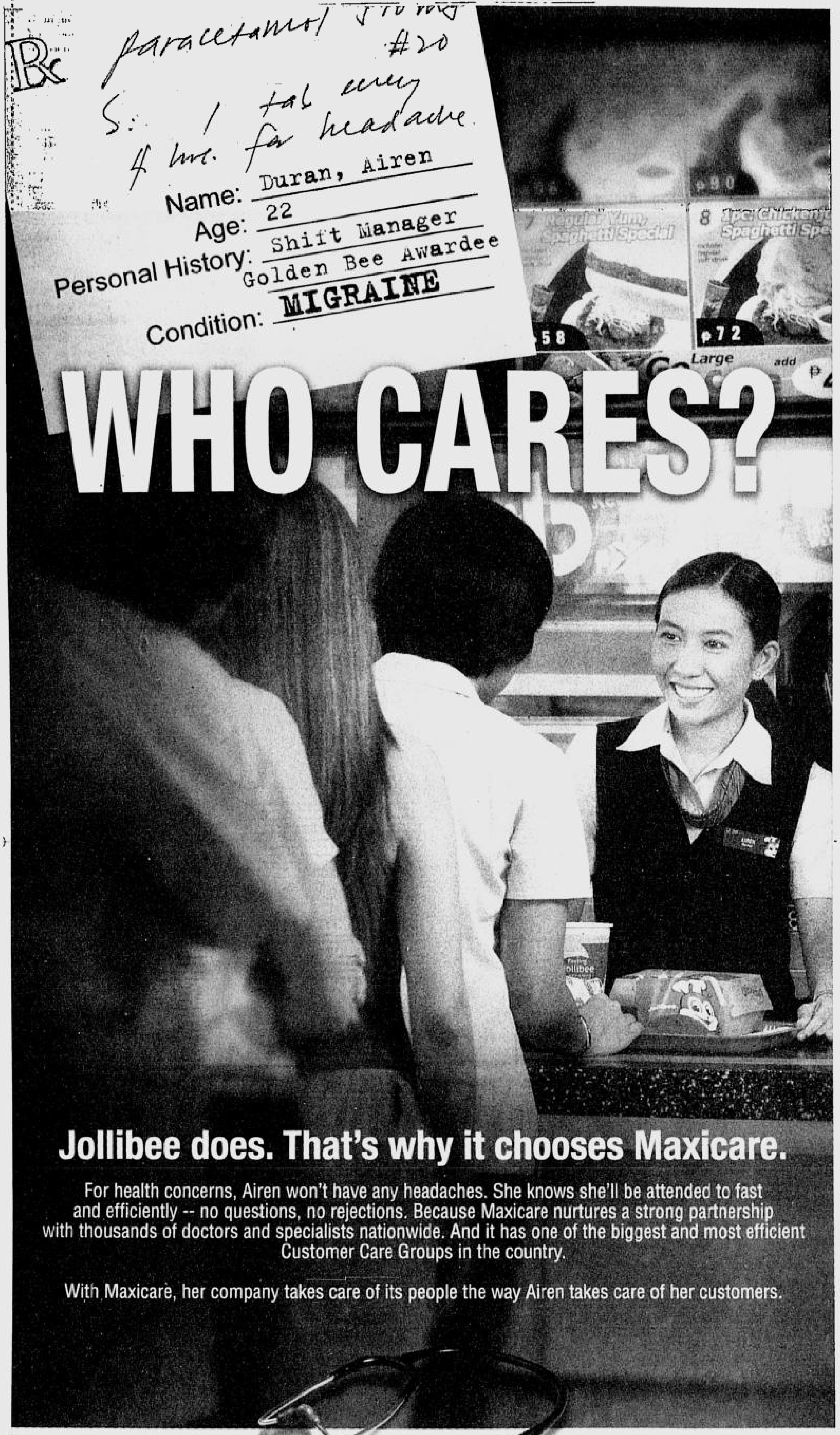

℞ paracetamol 500 mg #20
S: 1 tab every 4 hrs. for headache

Name: Duran, Airen
Age: 22
Personal History: Shift Manager
Golden Bee Awardee
Condition: MIGRAINE

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New beauty breakthroughs

From page E1

The Skin Clearing line is geared toward acne-prone skin. The foam cleanser removes all makeup and dirt and attacks bacteria; the toner cleans deep down, regulates oil production and kills bacteria; and the Essence unclogs pores and boosts skin clarity and texture.

These products are for those people who love their pore-refining line but need something more for acne control.

An extra: During the Neutrogena launch, I discovered hair stylist Nelson Cruz from Toni and Guy, and he cut my hair. Now I have volume and style even if all I do is wash and wear my hair. Compliments to Nelson all the way, who regularly travels to London and other places abroad to update his skills. His star colorist Ali Tiongson was with him, too.

Toni and Guy is located at 6750 Ayala Avenue. Call 8128559.

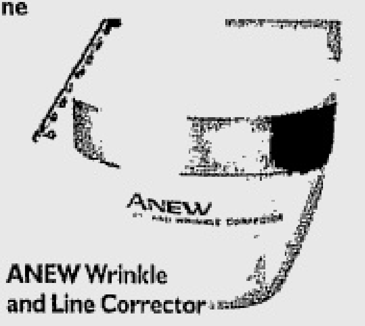
The Body Shop has the limited-edition Autumn trend till end of this month only. My favorite items are the lip and cheek stain in Berry and Sun Red at P550 each, which give your lip that just-bitten look, as if you sucked on a cherry popsicle or drank cranberry juice.

Better yet, they're non-drying, as they contain sucrose which hydrates without oil and seals moisture in. They don't give you that tell-tale sign of gloss, but the effect on your lips and cheeks lasts almost forever!

The store's other showcased items are the Shimmer Cubes for eyes, cheeks and body at P1,195 each. These come in five shades that add a sexy touch on bare skin during nights out anywhere. Lip Colour and Liner cost P595 each, in three shades.

Eyebrow fanatics will also be glad to know that the store's easy-to-apply Eyebrow Kit at P550 is back and will stay on. Hooray!

NEUTROGENA Skin Clearing line



ANEW Wrinkle and Line Corrector

THE BODY SHOP'S Lip and Cheek Stain (left) and Shimmer Cubes

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WHAT DO BEST EMPLOYERS HAVE IN COMMON?

Top corporations cited as best employers cultivate excellent human resource programs as well as ensure a sound corporate culture. All of them strongly believe that their biggest assets are their employees and their best investments are in programs designed to foster harmonious employee-employer relationships.

Employers such as Jollibee Foods Corp., Discovery Suites, and Sun Life of Canada (Philippines), Inc., among others, believe that it is not enough to become stewards of 'work-life balance' and offer good compensation packages to enhance productivity. It is also vital to focus on promoting the health and well-being of their employees. What then do they have in common? Maxicare - one of the premier private healthcare service providers in the country.

Maxicare has a solid reputation for quality healthcare because of its impressive roster of the best Philippine medical specialists and facilities. Members can count on the prompt, professional and precise services of the country's leading medical practitioners/specialists in different medical fields such as cardiology, oncology, pulmonology, etc. They boast of over 220 affiliated hospitals, over 64 clinics and ambulatory centers, over 4,000 medical and dental specialists nationwide. Their services also include international coverage at no cash-out.

Maxicare understands how valuable people are in every industry. That is why the company believes that medical help is a priority that should not be delayed nor denied. Apart from giving members the freedom to choose their preferred accredited doctor, hospital or clinic, Maxicare has the biggest and most efficient customer care group to provide members with efficient service and assistance. A testimony and indication of how satisfied members are, is Maxicare's retention rate of 98%, a rate that remains unparalleled in the industry.

With Maxicare, valued members are assured of the most comprehensive healthcare benefit ever offered in the industry.

So what makes these best employers choose Maxicare?
They care.

Maxicare

Healthcare for those you care about.

MAXICARE INTRODUCES NEW CORPORATE LOGO

Maxicare, one of the country's biggest health maintenance organizations, recently launched a new corporate logo to signal their aggressive strategic plan to become the most preeminent HMO in the country. The enhanced logo, which incorporates a redesigned stethoscope giving it a 3 dimensional and realistic look, also communicates a powerful message: 'Healthcare for those you care about'. According to Mr. James Maloney, President & CEO of Maxicare, the new corporate logo symbolizes the company's enduring commitment and vision of providing high-quality healthcare and superior service to Filipinos. The enhanced visual also preserves the equity the former Maxicare logo continues to hold with clients who have trusted them throughout the years.

Maxicare is a joint venture between Maxicare, Equitable PCIBank, the country's 3rd largest bank and CIGNA of North America, America's premier HMO service provider. The collective expertise and financial resources of this partnership enables Maxicare to be the stable company that its members can always rely on whenever and wherever they are needed most.

For more details on how you can provide high-quality healthcare for those you care about, please call Maxicare at 7504888.

ADVT

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Night's a Thrill at Streetscape
September 26 • Samba De Orfeu 9pm to midnight
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Merienda muna...

Aspiring florists vie for 3rd Cuna Cup

Although amateurs, contestants impressed a Malaysian judge with their skills

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ONE of the entries in the Rachy Z. Cuna Cup 2003

By Tita V. Giron

FATHER Blanco's botanical garden provided the right ambience for the Third Rachy Z. Cuna Floral Cup, a flower arranging competition, held last Sunday. It must have been the green trees and lush hedges in the background that created an inspiring chromatic setting for the whole day competition where contestants, all amateur and aspiring florists, created dozens of beautiful floral arrangements displayed on top of tables covered with red and white linen.

This year, "big brother, little brother" could well be the title of the Cuna floral cup. The "big brothers"—top florist suppliers and cut-flower producers, professional florists and flower shop owners—turned up at the event, to boost the morale of the "little brothers" or amateur florist contestants. They also donated flowers, foliage and other florist materials used by the contestants for their creations.

Three categories

The competition was divided into three categories—hand-tied bouquet, dinner table centerpiece and designer's challenge. Criteria for judging included creativity, color harmony and combination, technique and application, suitability to occasion, and workmanship.

Hand-tied arrangement could be a bouquet for a bride and her entourage or guest-of-honor, or for a flower vase. Judges gave high scores for freestanding bouquets that followed basic rules in structure and aesthetics. Convenience and safety also earned points.

For the dinner centerpiece, contestants had to design an arrangement for a table for ten. As in the hand-tied category, each contestant was given a bucket full of materials from which they selected items for their arrangements.

"Designer's Challenge" was the third category. In this grand finale, contestants were given free rein to design and interpret their own arrangement with an imaginary budget of P2,000. Those who spent more than the budget lost points. Interestingly, nobody exceeded the budget despite the generous use of materials.

Judges' choices

Lim Poh Bee of Malaysia, chair of the judging committee, said the amateur contestants were "potentially excellent florists, considering their lack of formal training." It was a much valued compliment coming from a leading floral designer and owner of a floral arts school in Penang. Lim is also a member of the prestigious American Institute of Floral Designers and current vice chair of the World Flower Council for Asia and Pacific Rim.

At stake at the competition were P20,000 for first prize, P10,000 for second prize and P5,000 for third prize.

The judges' choices were Lito Mejia of Mom's–The Flower Shop, first prize; Ronaldo de Juan of Milagrosa's Fields of Flowers, second; and Toti Apostol, a freelance arranger, third.

Asked what inspired their floral arrangements for the designer's challenge, the contestants gave several interesting answers. Apostol, who was teary-eyed when he won third prize, said his creation was an offering to Mama Mary. The freelance florist arranges flowers at a church.

Another contestant, Ric Lipio, said the Rachy Cuna cup inspired him. He expressed the hope it would progress through the years. Other participants voiced similar heartwarming wishes that the competition, now on its third year, would continue to inspire amateur and aspiring florists in the country.

Masters show skills

Two past winners and a third, who is obviously a master arranger but could not compete because of a technicality, showed the skills and talents that had impressed previous audiences. They were Nonito Gallo, Willie Tongco and Mario de Vera.

Gallo, who was first in a previous competition, created an imposing two-tiered centerpiece incorporating flowers and foliage. A versatile arrangement, it can be used as a buffet table centerpiece or a welcome decor for a foyer.

Tongco, a second prize winner and evidently a master of improvisation, showed how he could turn a weird-looking *makabuhay* vine and other novel materials into an artistic structure for a tall flower arrangement. For an added feature, he made another flower arrangement on a painter's frame using fresh

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IT'S cool San Miguel Beer for hotshots Chiyuki Fujimoto, Danding Cojuangco, Chatrachai Bunya-Ananta, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, Khampi Suwaranat, Ramon Ang and Daniel Javier.

THE NIPPON connection: Tamaki of UFJ Bank, Kazutoshi Sugekawa of Marubeni Corp. and Norihiku Shimizu of UFJ Bank

ELEGANT southern lady Gretchen Oppen with her husband Danding Cojuangco and former Sen. Ernesto Maceda

SAN Miguel Corp. gang: Vivian Dyquiangco, Boybitz Victoria, Daniel Javier and Bobet Briones

THE BIG three: Evelyn Singson with Ramon Monzon and Jaime Singson

Canadian farewell, beer toast and Macau surprise

AIR France's popular GM, charmant monsieur Louie Vergeon

NEWSPAPERMAN Jarius Bondoc

SAY SMILE. Maritess Pineda, Agnes De Kok and Gul Tanghe

SINGAPOREAN Ambassador Kheng Hua Lim and business magnate Babes Romualdez

CANADIAN Embassy's First Secretary Charles Godfrey and counselor Dougal Aucoin

OLIVIER Jacques, Gisele Aucoin and Robert McCubbing, all from the Canadian Embassy

CHINESE silk everywhere. Moissanite Jewelry's slim headturner Mia Florencio, Arce Dairy's Digna Arce and Stores Specialists Inc.'s Malu Francisco

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by
Alex Van Hagen
on Kodak Max

CONSUL **Fortune Ledesma** of Monaco and civic-oriented **Agnes Huibonhoa** organized a farewell reception at the Manila Polo Club for Ambassador **Robert** and **Marilyn Collette** of Canada, who are all set to return to Toronto soon. With these two gals hosting, you can be sure a party will be a smashing success, and a success it was, *palanggas*.

Many of the well-wishers canceled their out-of-town plans to be present to bid adieu to the well-loved and respected couple. After all, Ambassador Robert and Marilyn have made many friends from their four-year stint in the Philippines.

"The kind, warm and down-to-earth disposition of both husband and wife earned them the affection and admiration of many," said a sentimental Agnes. "It's sad to have to say goodbye to them. But the Philippines shall always have its doors wide open to them, with many friends I'm sure, eager to welcome them back."

The best-looking men stole the scene this time. The socialites and the younger babes surrounded the embassy dudes—all tall and not tanned, young and handsome, such as **Olivier Jacques** and **Robert McCubbing**, both third secretaries, and **Brian Le Blanc**.

One chi-chi society gal even commented about Olivier J's eyes: "Wow! His eyes have got that naughty, mean look and say something that could knock a woman's heart out!"

Now you know why it was such a smashing party. It lasted hours past the designated time, *palanggas*.

***

Dusit Hotel Nikko recently opened successfully the Fiesta San Miguel, which offers freshly brewed cool San Miguel Beer and other Filipino specialties.

Instead of the obligatory ceremonial ribbon cutting, the guests toasted one another for prosperity.

Hotshots of honor were Makati Mayor **Jejomar Binay**, San Miguel Corp. president **Ramon Ang**, and Dusit Group officers **Khun Chatrachai Bunya-Ananta** and **Khun Khampi Suwanarat.**

While **Johnny Litton** hosted, the guests experienced the cool taste of San Miguel Pale Pilsen and San Mig Light, both freshly brewed from Fiesta San Miguel's unique microbrewery.

While we circulated and sipped our cocktails, the fabulous San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra entertained us with a fantastic repertoire.

If that wasn't already a treat, much later, Fiesta San Miguel Bar presented top acoustic guitarist **Paolo Santos.**

All that tasty beer poured like forever. And the crowd of 300 rocked the place when the Rockin' Revival Band dished out its great sounds.

We partied till 3 a.m. Well, that's what this new watering hole does to you, *palanggas*.

Other hotshots included the hotel's board of directors and patrons such as **Evelyn Singson** and **Washington Sycip,** British Airways manager **Violy Echevarria,** Qantas Airways Philippine manager **Honeybee Hubahib,** debonaire tres charmant Air France manager **Louie Vergeon,** Asiana Airlines general manager **Rene Banzon,** billiard world champion **Efren "Bata" Reyes,** and San Miguel cagers **Boybitz Victoria** and **Nick Belasco.** They were having a blast!

After all, *palanggas*, Dusit Hotel Nikko is the only hotel that has its own microbrewery. Diners of this new outlet will now have the distinct experience of savoring freshly brewed beer.

As Mr. Music **Ryan Cayabyab** commented, "I am not a beer drinker, but I can take this kind of beer because it is sweet with no bitter taste." It helped, too, that the beer was complemented by the superbly prepared food especially concocted for Fiesta San Miguel.

Hey! Check it out, it's really a cool place to spend a cool time. Fiesta San Miguel is at the ground floor of Dusit Hotel Nikko. For inquiries, call 8673333 local 3308.

RJ Ledesma with the elegant Vicky Assad, hostess and Monaco Consul Fortune Aleta-Ledesma, honoree Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette, Mayen Carmona and the other hostess of the affair, Agnes Huibonhoa

MASANORI Honda, director and executive vice president of Tokia Marine Malayan Insurance Co. Inc.; Toshiaki Hirai, president of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Phil. Inc.; Masaharu Kubo, Philippine vice president and regional manager for Japan Airlines; and Seiichi Kimoto, Manila branch general manager for Itochu Corporation

MARISSA Bondoc with Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette

SUPER pals Tata Poblador and Mina Gabor

SECOND Secretary Martine Roquebrune and Canadian Embassy's Brian Le Blanc

PLEASED with being the judges' choice for the Best Chinese Award: Mme. Mitsuki Kimiya shows off her exquisite cheongsam while Narz Lim and Mary Ann Bringas look on.

LADIES of the diplo-set: Chile's Carmen Lynam, Monaco Consul Fortune Ledesma, San Marcelino Medical Clinic's Arlene Jacobo, Togo Consul Evie Costa and Lilian Madera

THE STAFF of the Macau Government Tourist Office in their traditional Macanese costumes, with Cebu Pacific flight attendants

IT'S the Oriental look: In their colorful Chinese garbs are Narz Lim, PICC's Jet Cabuslay, Ideaz's Bob Zozobrado, Select Media's Arlene Florentino and Cory Quirino looking every bit like a Chinese doll.

Macau: city of culture

Since many countries in the East are offering tours at giveaway prices, it's no surprise that the travel set are looking for new, exciting destinations to visit again or to discover. One of these pulsating places is just an hour and a half away. It's a small city, rich in culture, fantastic history and sumptuous cuisine—Macau!

This former colony of Portugal is a riot of colors because of the blending of the East and the West. The small but exciting city is a big favorite for seasoned travelers.

Yes, *palanggas*, Macau now has several new exciting attractions to offer. The new attractions became the occasion for a fun cocktail party at the Peninsula Hotel Manila hosted by former tourism undersecretary **Narzalina Lim,** who now heads the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO), and the newly designated Philippine representative, **Mary Ann Bringas.**

To blend with Macau's oriental ambience, the guests came in their best chinoise attire. This made the hosts so happy that they gave away a fabulous four-day, three-night, all-expenses-paid Macau holiday to the guest with "the best Chinese outfit." Contenders included **Viring Ongkeko,** who showed off her Chinese attire topped with a Western hat; Stores Specialists' **Malu Francisco; Diana Arce** from Arce Dairy; the lovable duo **Yolly** and **Serge Ayson;** the bubbly **Elena Arias; Antonia Squillantini;** Genesis president **Angeli Pangilinan Valenciano; Becky Garcia;** and other Suzy Wong wannabes.

Mitsuki Kimiya of Japan bagged the best Chinese costume prize. Her skillfully embellished cheongsam from Shanghai with matching handbag transformed her into a chic Chinese royal.

Other, winners who took home various Macanese collector's items were honorary consul **Evie Costa** of the Republic of Togo; honorary consul **Kathleen Yulo** of Slovenia, who came with her hubby, former PSE chairman **Nonoy Yulo; Nicole Carlos** (daughter of honorary consul of Cote d' Ivoire **Tina Carlos**); CCP board trustee **Tessie Luz;** and Moissanite Jewellery's **Mia Florencio,** who won the raffle's grand prize, another four-day, three-night, all-expenses-paid Macau holiday.

During the party, a colorful video footage of Macau was shown surveying the territory's beautiful attractions.

The night's grand highlight was a spectacular performance of wushu, the Chinese martial arts, by bemedalled Philippine national athletes **Willy Wang, Arvin Ting, Lily So** and **Janice Hung.** The dancers displayed fantastic and precise artistic maneuverings with their bladed weapons. They mesmerized the audience and kept them on the edge of their seats. Many of the society gals moved back to avoid falling within the distance of the flying swords!

One very high-profile socialite pointed to her two supposed friends across the room. She said, "She spends money like her husband is printing it and as if it's going out of style." Pointing to the other, she said, "Well, her son quit school for a job. Isn't that awful, Maurice? It's so low-class. I tell you what some people will do for money." With that, I excused myself and asked for a stiff vodka martini.

LITO Mejia of Mom's–The Flower Shop, Baguio City, received the first place award for floral excellence.

FREELANCER Totie Apostol received the third place citation.

Aspiring florists vie for 3rd Cuna Cup

From page F1

flowers and leaves.

De Vera's arrangement using two large clear glass vases, one on top of the other, was in a class of its own. Each vase was filled halfway with water and purple flowers. For special effect, he topped the arrangement with acrylic strips and used blue colored spotlights at the base of the glasses. De Vera, although obviously skillful, cannot join the competition because his boss is one of the organizers.

Happy ending

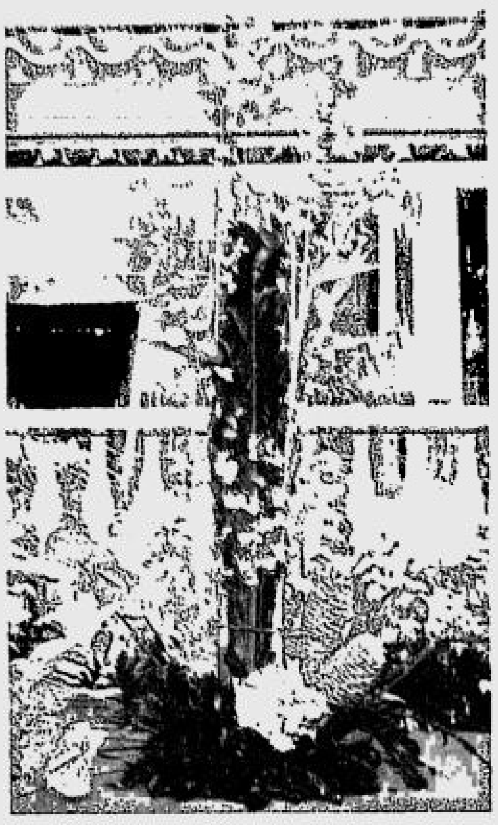
The prestigious floral cup competition was the brainchild of Rachy Cuna, after whom it was named, with a big boost from friends at the Floral Arts and Craft Design Center, a school for flower arrangement.

"Until three years ago, there was no flower industry to speak of, although we estimated that there were 3,000 florists all over the country. We decided that it was time for florists to unite, and we thought of a prestigious floral competition to bring them together," Cuna, dubbed floral architect, explained.

During the past two years, there were also competitions for professional florists. This year, the organizers decided to make it an all-amateur event. "We want to give them the attention and the right boost of confidence that they truly deserve," Cuna explained.

As in the past, this year's competition featured raffles of items personally designed and handcrafted by the floral architect himself.

Call Floral Arts and Craft Design Center at 7228644/7258986. The center holds special floral arts classes of 4-10 students per session.



ARRANGEMENT by one of the contestants in the Rachy Z. Cuna Cup 2003

RACHY Cuna (fifth from left) with FACDCI officers and judges: (from left) internal affairs VP Larry R. Sia, assistant corporate secretary Letty M. de Castro, emcee Al Caronan (partly hidden), treasurer Belen G. Bactad, external affairs VP Beth S. Lopez, World Flower Council international vice chairperson for the Asia and Pacific region Lim Poh Bee, president Pearl B. Banaag, board of judges members Tita Giron and Francis Gener, and corporate secretary Marilou S. Lim

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CEAE comes of age

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

IN 2000, a non-profit, non-stock organization called the Center for Environmental Awareness and Education (CEAE) was set up by an environment-minded young man aided by an equally young and focused staff, many of them volunteers. Their goals were both practical and ambitious. They simply wanted to enhance environmental education in the Philippines, although they started out almost without funds.

But, as most success stories go, their youth and idealism—as well as guts—made the difference.

The young organizer realized, as a student and then as staff member of Haribon Foundation, that ecology in the Philippines was a subject that was taken up only as a section in the whole array of subjects in a school's curriculum. And yet, he thought, its importance could be better instilled in young minds if integrated in all the other subjects.

He believed that students would get the message faster if taught this way—that most everything around them have environmental significance which they can relate to if taught well. And so he set up the CEAE.

Today, after three years of operation, CEAE chalks up more than a hundred workshops all over the country—from Benguet in Luzon to Ozamis in Mindanao—touching the minds and hearts of all those that took part in them.

Teaching the teachers

CEAE's education program is geared to teachers in kindergarten and intermediate levels. It is based on two curriculum and activity guide books that serve as teaching modules. One is called Project Wet (for Water Education for Teachers) and the other, Project Learning Tree (PLT), which uses the forest as "window on the world."

Teachers are trained by facilitators who also completed the training. The value of those two curriculum guide books, now internationally recognized, is that they are interdisciplinary, meaning they can be used in all subjects, whether mathematics, history or literature. They can thus provide an academic framework that can be utilized in formal or non-formal education systems. They also include activities that can be conducted inside or out of a classroom.

The fact that the books were conceived and written by experts in the United States, most of them educators or involved hands-on in particular environmental areas, make them authoritative. All the lessons and ideas they contain can be applied in any country with just a few modifications and substitutes.

But we find something new in the CEAE. For, following the same thrusts of the authors of Project WET and PLT, CEAE cuts across traditional disciplinary boundaries. But, to be, more effective, it does so within the Philippine context. And this is where the system, as applied here, will bear some changes.

Filipinized versions

Although the format of the two books will not be changed (they're excellent as they are), examples and concepts have to be placed in a Filipino context. Instead of referring to icebergs, for example, a Pasig River experience will be substituted. This is intended to make environmental problems and solutions better understood by Filipinos.

Like most good things that work out well, the CEAE must clear the way for further growth. From a staff of three in the first years, it grew to a team of seven, enhanced by two part-time workers and a group of active volunteers. Today, it has formed a CEAE board which, with its network all over the country, will eventually operate as the nerve center in the promotion of environmental education.

The young man who got the wheels of the CEAE going is Jukka Holopainen, who grew up in Cebu, studied at the Ateneo and Southwestern University in Cebu and did a stint with the Haribon Foundation. It was during his stints with the last two institutions that, he said, his eyes were opened to the country's environmental needs and he was led to a career as environmentalist. He received a grant from a bank that enabled him to attend conferences and, later, workshops in Washington, DC (for PLT) and Montana (Project WET).

Formal setup

After a time, Jukka realized that for CEAE to sustain its growth, it needed a more formal group to manage, not that it wasn't formal enough when it began. But, with its network of educators spanning the country and greater public and private interest in it, there was need to delineate functions of facilitators and trainers and for a governing body to centralize activities. Thus, the CEAE board was formed.

The board consists of Jukka, president; Vida Vergal, vice president; Gina Pascual, secretary; Glynda Bathan, treasurer; and Mei Velas, Bong Socco and Fabian Dayrit, members.

The new setup, in effect, has recharged the CEAE, which is now embarking on more projects and programs, such as the Watershed Education, Watershed Box, Mangrove and Reef Education, Reefball, Environmental Quiz Night and Environmental Film Festival 2004, all of which we hope to report on as soon as they are launched.

The CEAE office is at the 3/F, Gilmore Heights, 18 Granada cor. Castilla Sts., Barangay Valencia, Quezon City. Fax 7217360 or e-mail info@ceae.org

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

Bazaar for aspiring entrepreneurs

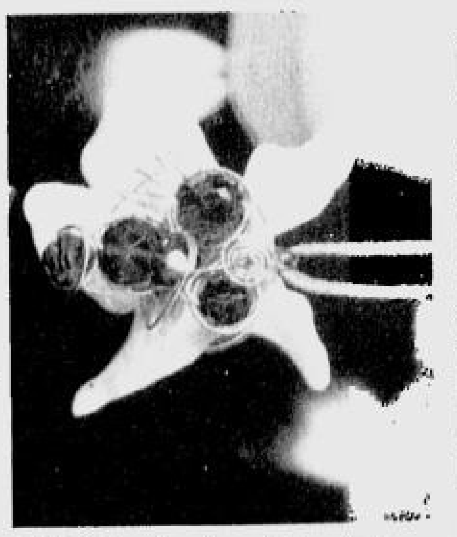
GIVEN the bleak economic times, many have taken it upon themselves to find ways to strengthen their earning power this Christmas.

A young entrepreneur who has ventured into a hobby-based business is Ciara Marasigan, wire artist and single proprietor of Ciara Creates.

A fourth year management student at UA&P, Ciara has always had a penchant for beautiful things as a little girl, from intricate embroidery and fine furniture to porcelain dolls and lace. She has turned this fascination into a business by creating pendants, cuffs, *painetas* and earrings.

Ciara has also discovered the perfect venue to showcase her creativity—the Noel Discovery Bazaar. The Noel Bazaars always feature an enviable lineup of quality products to ensure that the most hard-to-please bazaar-goers will not leave empty handed.

If, like Ciara, you feel you have the perfect product to wow the crowds at the Manila Polo Club on Oct. 25-26 and Nov. 29-30 and at the World Trade Center on Nov. 21-23, call Cut Unlimited, Inc. at 6870654/6877523 and telefax 6870604 and be a part of Noel Bazaars.



CIARA Marasigan's orchid pendant made of mother-of-pearl cuts with glass crystal on a leather strap

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Malls, Stalls & Department Stores

What's with the love affair with these establishments, aside from the calming appeal of air-conditioned environs and the stimulating variety of affordable attractions?

An experience larger than life

FILIPINOS love malls, and malls love Filipinos. Don't argue, or the rebuttal of the masses would bury you neck deep in shopping bags. Try thinking of any activity, and chances are you'll imagine yourself doing it in a mall (except maybe when you think of racing in Formula 1).

What's with the love affair with these establishments, aside from the calming appeal of air-conditioned environs and the stimulating variety of affordable attractions? Ask around and you would get varied responses. Oh, they say, we go to malls because the movie houses are here. We go to malls to hang out and maybe spend nothing but for the parking space. We go to department stores and malls to "people watch" (why, just like in Hollywood walks, you never know the celebrity or political figure you'd bump into just by walking aimlessly in any mall).

Some just take in the simple pleasures of window shopping, and dreaming of becoming mannequins for a day just to wear what they do. And, of course, those who can afford it go to the malls and department stores for some serious shopping and preening.

Yup. There's something for everyone at some of the world's largest malls that have managed to fit onto our small islands. And malls are continuously evolving to attract ever more people, people who translate to more profits whether they spend their hard-earned money here or not.

According to the site http://hkuhist2.hku.hk/nakasendo/deptstrs.htm, the origins of department stores "go back to 1673 when the Mitsui family established a dry-goods store in Edo, at the terminus of the Nakasendo." It goes on to say that "Mitsukoshi is the largest department store in Japan, with branches in major European, North American and Asian cities."

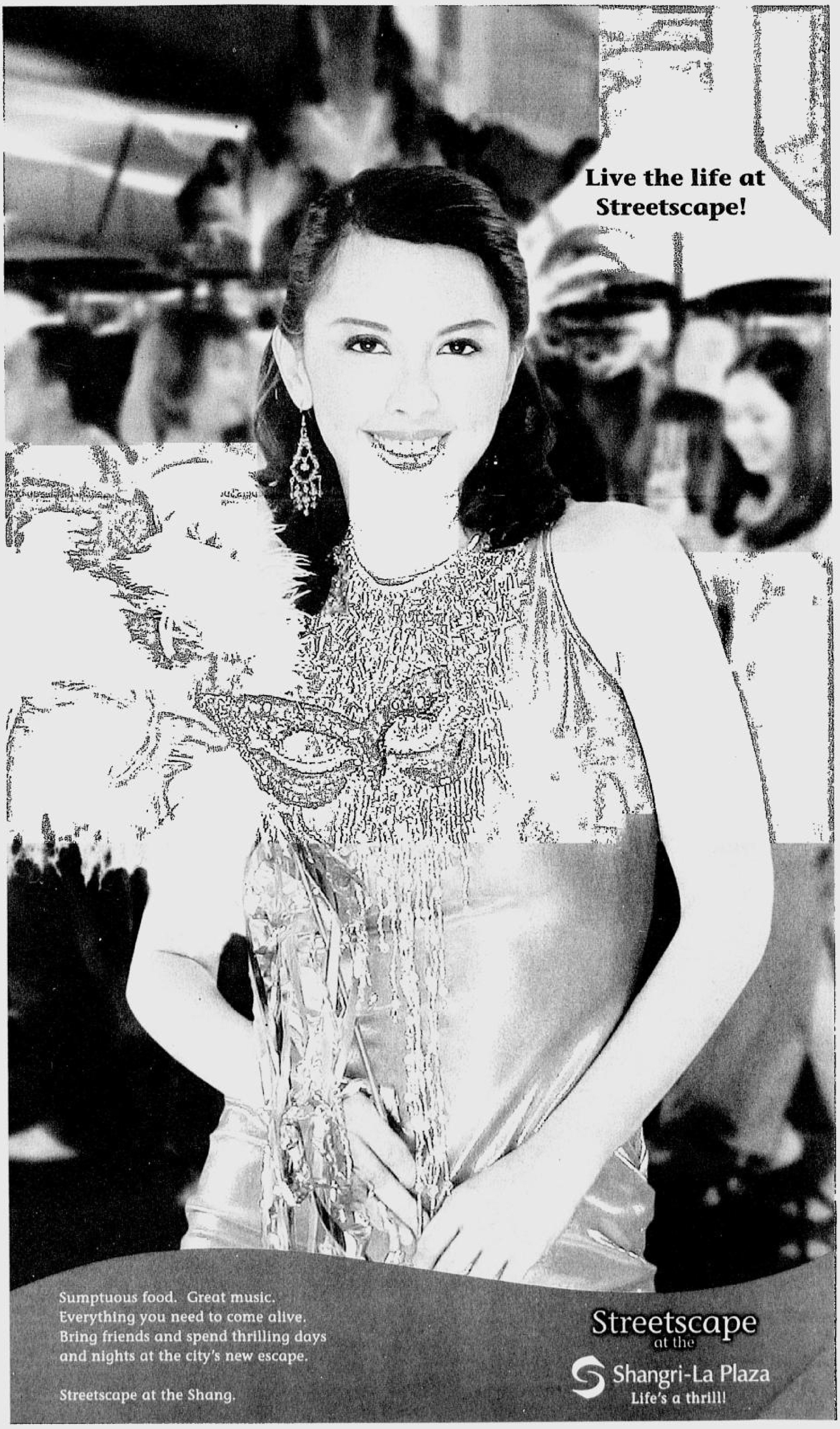
Some would even dare say that in this country, department stores and malls actually got their origins from the two most frequented places in the barrios: the *palengke* and *peryahan*. Department stores, and its more chic cousin malls, have evolved from just participating in straight trade into creating and maintaining lifestyles suitable for any age, social status, or gender. That means, not only have the wet and dry markets and carnivals have been assimilated, but the rest of what we see in the community are now integral parts of modern malls as well.

As the Japanese site proudly describes its own country's department stores "developing the idea of one-stop shopping to the extreme", Filipino mall designers are not far behind. You not only see stalls, stores, shops and restos and cinemas in malls. Without straining your neck too much, you might even see skating rinks, theme parks, water sports, exposition halls-why, you might even end up signing up at a dance or fitness studio after sweating it out in the wall climbing section.

And we see no limits to what department stores and malls can offer in the future. Perhaps even an F1 race can be hosted indoors, at a future "super-mega-ultra" mall. Or maybe the World Cup, where a hundred thousand fans can enjoy watching the games played live inside the mall, while the spillover crowd can watch the game broadcast in the moviehouses. Or how about a floating "city-mall", five times as large as the biggest aircraft carrier, cruising the seas, making port calls all over the world. The concept would combine shopping and travel, making you do both simultaneously.

And while our imagination's at it, why not build a big glass dome enveloping the entire city, connected to thousands of barges on Manila Bay fitted with air-conditioning units?

Now that would be the ultimate malling experience, don't you think?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Big treats from Little Tikes at Eastwood City Walk

BIG DISCOUNTS on Little Tikes toys, a chance to win a Little Tikes Bedroom Showcase and an exciting lineup of weekend treats for the whole family-all these await Eastwood City Walk patrons from Sept. 14 to Oct. 10.

For a minimum purchase of P1,000 at any participating food establishment at Eastwood City Walk, one can apply for a Little Tikes Club membership card that offers an exclusive 25-percent discount on Little Tikes toys. Those interested may fill out an application form and submit it together with their proof of purchase to the Little Tikes booth at the Eastwood Central Plaza on or before Oct. 10. The Little Tikes Club membership will be processed and delivered within 15 to 20 working days.

Every minimum purchase worth P1,000 at any of Eastwood City Walk's participating restaurants also entitles customers to a raffle coupon that gives them a chance to win a Little Tikes Bedroom Showcase. All entries should be dropped into the Little Tikes drop boxes located at the Eastwood Central Plaza on or before Oct. 10. The grand raffle draw will be held at the Eastwood Central Plaza on Oct. 12. The winner will be notified by mail.

Eastwood City Walk will also host a variety of fun events for children. All Sundays from Sept. 14 to Oct. 12 will feature activities such as coloring sessions and ceramic painting at 12 noon, Pentel's face painting and drawing workshop at 2 p.m., fun games at 4 p.m. and a mascot performance at 5 p.m.

The Little Tikes Club membership will be processed and delivered within 15 to 20 working days

Different shows will also be staged after 5 p.m. every Sunday. On Sept. 28, animal lovers will delight in the talents of two poodles and a monkey as they perform amazing tricks in the "Dog and Monkey Show."

On Oct. 5, a clown magician will entertain kids while Kidz Salon, a mobile salon, will offer girls and boys hairstyling services and nail art.

On Oct. 12, kids will enjoy participating in two interactive shows. The Happy Hats Show features fully costumed entertainers performing magic tricks, balloon sculpturing and song-and-dance numbers. A storytelling portion also allows kids and their parents to stage their own mini-show. The "Amazing Bubble Show", hosted by Cherry Mapua-Osmena, teaches kids bubble-making techniques. One of the highlights of the show is the "human bubble" portion, where kids are placed inside giant bubbles.

Pre-Christmas exhibit at Greenhills starts Oct. 3

A PRE-Christmas exhibit dubbed the 10th Philippine Gifts, Toys, Housewares, Christmas Decors and Shopping Mart will be held from Oct. 3 to 26 at the Greenhills Shopping Complex in San Juan.

With over a thousand exhibitors from different regions, the 24-day trade fair is much awaited among bargain hunters and shoppers from Metro Manila and the provinces because of high-quality and low-priced products, local and imported. This is the best time for bargain hunters and shoppers to buy Christmas gifts because prices are still low.

Considered the home of the best tiangge in the country, Greenhills is a favorite shopping destination because it is accessible, has many and varied food chains, has a good neighborhood, has many modern theaters, available recreation centers, a wide parking area and courteous and reliable security guards.

Now on its 10th year, the annual trade fair presents the best opportunity for promoting products and establishing potential and regular buyers. It is a specialist trade and consumer show wherein over-the-counter sales is one of its main highlights, aside from the normal trade show, which is mainly centered on booking of orders. The Centermall is formed to be the premier venue of exhibition of foreign and Philippine-made products.

This is the best time for bargain hunters and shoppers to buy Christmas gifts because prices are still low

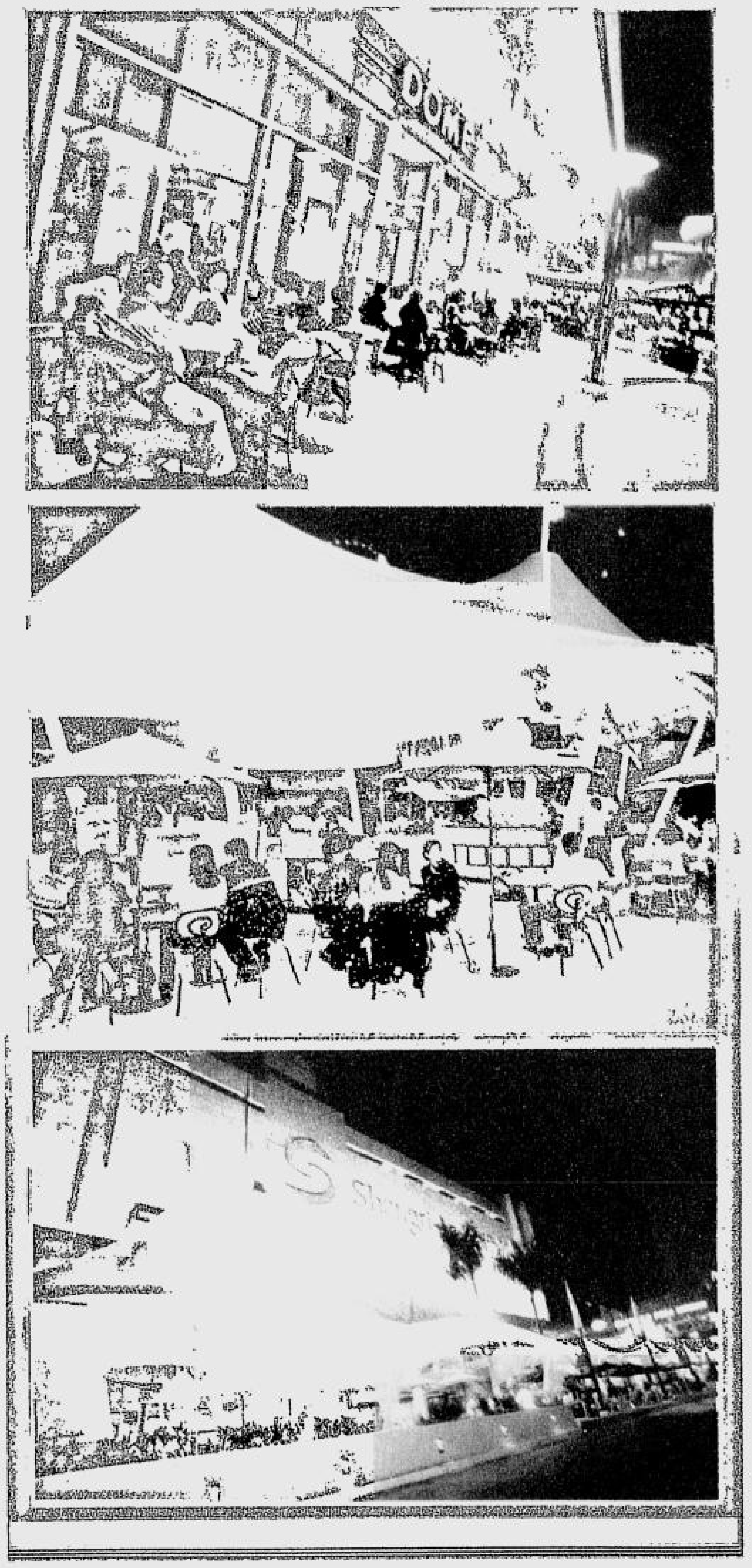
Among those to be showcased are Christmas decors, toys, gift items, corporate giveaways, novelty items, loose gemstones and pearls, precious and semi-precious jewelry, mariner's items, coins and stamps, leathergoods, porcelain, jars and potteries, sporting goods and accessories, modern furniture and furnishing, antique furniture and furnishing, cellular phones and accessories, RTWs, other Christmas ornamentals, accessories and related products.

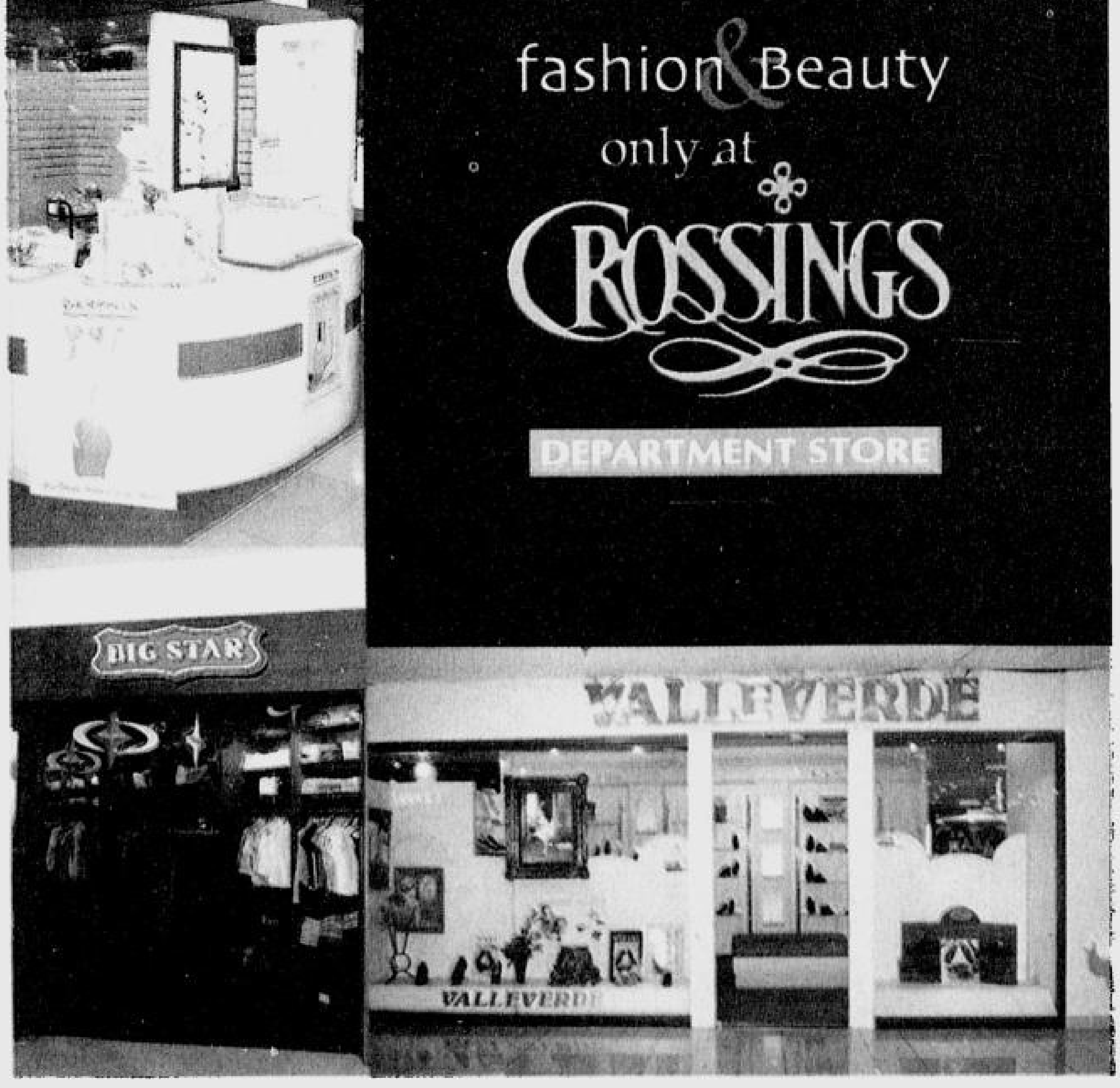
Interested traders can coordinate with Patepco, and look for Ariel Villanueva, overall coordinator, Jun Reyes, office manager, or project coordinators Ai-Ai Babiera, Albert Castro, Celina Umali, or Beth Bustillo at telephone numbers 820-3862, 826-8162, 826-6732, or 829-3195.

Streetscape: The Shang's newest getaway

EVER since Shangri-La Plaza launched Streetscape, the dining and recreational landscape in the Mandaluyong area has never been the same. Set amid lush palm trees, flowering ornamental shrubs and elegant, tiled walkways, Streetscape is the latest and most relaxing way to enjoy fine food, exciting entertainment and good company. Its tasteful walkways, custom-made white tents and that overall Shangri-La Plaza experience will surely compliment any event/occasion and make it an unforgettable experience.

Streetscape also boasts of a cornucopia of casual and fine-dining establishments like Starbucks, Via Mare, Gloria Maris, Red Crab, Mini Shabu-shabu, Dome, California Pizza Kitchen, Whistle Stop, International Sushi Bar, WateringHole, Crepes De France, Boca Boca Wine Bar, Cinnzeo. Patrons can choose to dine Indoors or maybe enjoy the sight, sounds and stars via the al fresco area.





CROSSINGS DEPARTMENT STORE

Compact, efficient shopping

NOW ON its 9th year in the retail industry, Crossings Department Store continues to provide its customers with compact and efficient shopping. Its wide array of merchandise ranges from basic necessities to luxury items, and even grocery needs. Thus, the company never ceases to fulfill its principles of form and function because after all, the company exists with this two-fold mission - hassle-free shopping and high-quality products.

A natural offshoot of National Book Store, the first branch of Crossings Department Store opened June 18, 1994 at the second phase of Shangri-la Plaza Mall in Mandaluyong City. Being at the crossroads of major thoroughfares, they were able to satisfy the market's demand for a place where they can get all their basic needs, and more, in one stop at a convenient and accessible location. The branch practically had everything, not only for the modern working women, but for the entire family, as well.

Crossings Department Store also boasts of fine brands in fashion and beauty, such as the German brand Big Star and Dolce & Gabbana's younger and hipper line & Dolce&Gabbana from Italy. Both apparel brands carry a complete line of men's and ladies' apparel and selected accessories. Animale is a ladies' apparel line from Indonesia while Susane, also for ladies, is from Portugal. Darphin from Paris is a complete line of beauty products, from hair care to skin care and even cosmetics. For one's home needs, the store also offers imported furniture, most of which showcase the best in Italian design.

In its effort to keep its promise of value shopping, Crossings Department Store continues to study its target market's needs and wants. Its merchandise buyers travel around Europe and Asia to source new brands and develop some product lines. This way, the company can keep itself abreast with the changing trends in retail, knowing that Filipinos have become very conscious when it comes to shopping for their varying needs and getting their money's worth.

To date, Crossings Department Store has four branches in the metropolis. The second branch opened in November 2002 in Rizal Avenue, followed by Quezon Avenue Branch in June 2001. These two branches each has a full-size supermarket. The fourth branch opened December 2002 in Northridge Plaza along Congressional Avenue. October 2002 marked the launch of the Darphin Beauty Institute in Franck Provost (Makati), which offers facial treatments using Darphin products. On the other hand, and Dolce&Gabbana opened a new boutique in Glorietta 4 last November. As for the company's further plans for expansion, the company's vice-president and general manager, Presy Ramos says "We are looking forward to have a good presence in the other major commercial areas, whether as a full department store or as a showcase of our exclusive brands."

With this in mind, Crossings Department Store's clients can look forward to the company's continuous efforts of providing reasonably priced and high-quality products, as well as the best service its staff can offer at their stores.

Nueva Viscaya products at Festival Supermall

FESTIVAL Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang features native handicraft and wood items, succulent produce, exotic fossilized flowers, ornamental plants and other indigenous products of Nueva Viscaya in an exhibit called "Nueva Viscaya goes to Alabang" that runs until Oct. 7 at the Carousel Court, Second Level.

Organized by the Nueva Viscaya office of Department of Trade and Industry, Caraballo, and the Southern Cordillera Agricultural Development Programme or Cascade, the exhibit presents a glimpse of the rich and unique entrepreneurial heritage of Nueva Viscaya, which is just six hours away from Manila.

Nueva Viscaya is located at the southernmost part of Region 2, an area with mostly mountainous land formations. This natural landscape helped the province to successfully cultivate important agricultural produce, including its export-quality oranges and high-value vegetable crops.

Local and foreign tourists can also get a glimpse of the natural wonders of the province during the exhibit. Nueva Viscaya is home to several attractions, most famous of which is the Salinas salt spring located at the capital Bayombong. Others include the Alayan Caves, Margarita Resort, and part of Mt. Pulag, the highest peak in Luzon, among other nature parks and mountain resorts.

Meanwhile, Festival Supermall also offers the best buys and great deals on high-tech electronics, cellular and communications gadgets at its ongoing Techno Sale that lasts until Sept. 30.

Stores offering special discounts on their products and services are Accent Micro, Asianic, Brochierre, Challenger Computer Store, CD Square, Data Blitz, PC Magic, The Computer Authority, Astrovision, Avid Sony, D' Cinema in Style, Sound Space, Anaheim, Cellphone Unlimited, and Smart Telecenter.

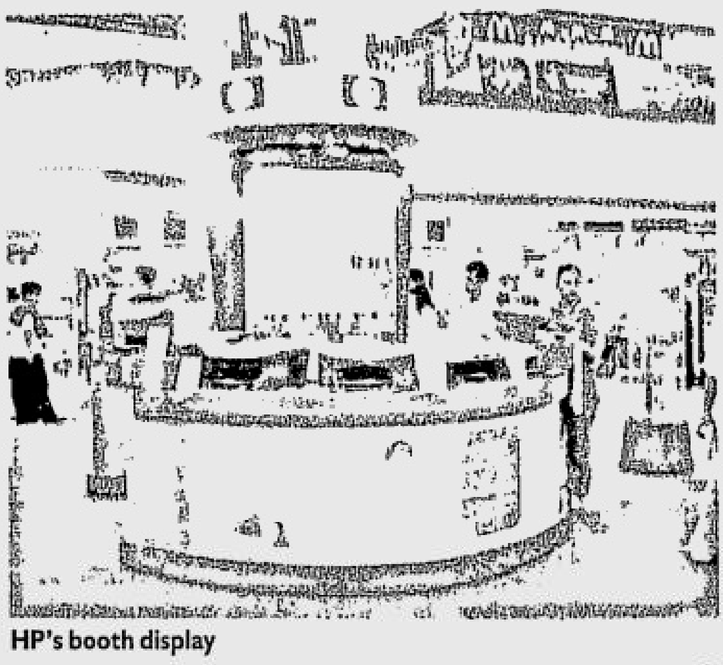
The sale event is one of the highlights of the mall's ongoing Techno Fair at the Carousel Court, Second Level. The fair features the latest video and audio electronics, personal computers, PC games, cellular phones, printers, and other high-tech gadgets available in the market today.

Visitors to the fair have until Sept. 27 to win any of the three HP deskjet printers and two game software packages at stake during the raffle draw. To join, they must complete a techno postcard with authorized signatures from participating shops. The postcard will serve as a raffle entry upon visiting Hewlett Packard, Ants/Smart ZED, AMDG, Asianic, Astrovision, D' Cinema in Style, Avid Sony, Western Marketing, Smart TSI, Co Green, Sound Space, and Challenger Computer Store.

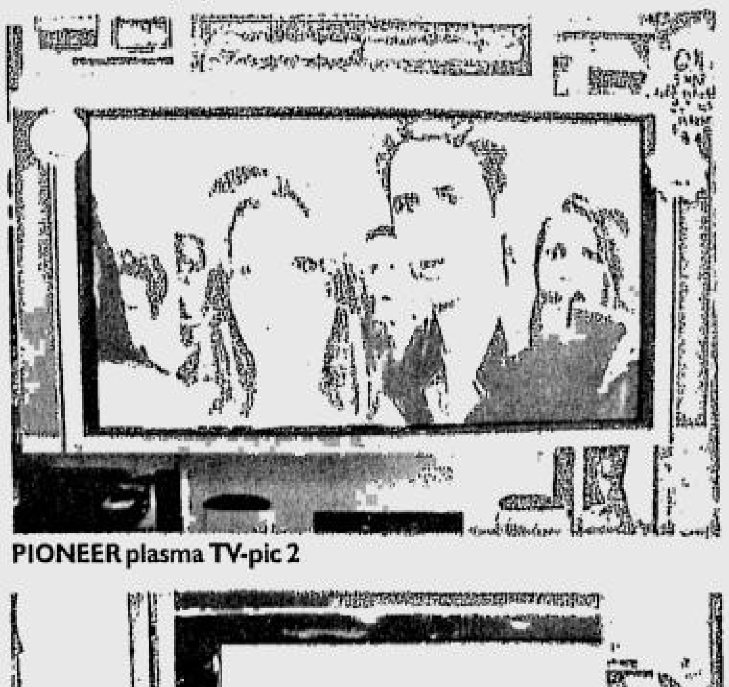
The fair's major sponsors are Hewlett Packard Philippines, Ants/Smart ZED and the Asian Media Development Group (AMDG), which have mini-raffles of their own. Exclusive to the fair is HP's Trade in, Trade up promotion, which entitles customers to rebates when they trade in their old printers for HP's new multifunction printers.

HP is also offering free printer check-up, gifts for the purchase of selected items, and P1,000 off on prices of selected PDAs. Ants/Smart ZED gives out free gifts to subscribers, while AMDG offers free hands-on gaming demos on the latest Vivendi Universal games, plus discounts on game software.

Festival Supermall is the largest shopping, dining and entertainment complex in Southern Metro Manila with over 550 specialty stores and restaurants under one roof. For more information, call customer service at 850-3514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com.



HP's booth display



PIONEER plasma TV-pic 2

SONY LCD mnotor(SDM H593)

Weekend mascot shows at Dreamscape

A WORLD of fun beckons at Dreamscape, the fully air-conditioned amusement theme, park and family entertainment center located at the 4th level of Robinsons Galleria. And for the whole month of September, more treats await customers as it opens its gates to walk-in guests for free everyday, including weekdays and holidays. The promo applies to birthday party guests as well, so celebrators need not worry about paying for additional costs for their guests to enter the park.

Not only that. Dreamscape will also stage mascot shows on all Saturdays and Sundays of September. Different cartoon characters are scheduled for each day, so kids can "Meet N Greet" various mascots each week.

Dreamscape is home to the Super Sonic V roller coaster, Thunder Cruiser, Roaring Rapids, Speed Bugs bump cars, Grand Parade carousel, Wild Wild Wheels, Dream Wheel and Rainbow Racers. It also has coin-operated rides for kids and popular games like Air Hockey, Hoopshots, video arcade and network gaming machines like Microsoft's X-Box for teen and adult gaming aficionados.

Dreamscape gives guests a comfortable place to enjoy their favorite rides and games-rain or shine, any day, any month of the year. Its accessibility from the different points of the metro also makes it an ideal place to hold kiddie parties and field trips.

Dreamscape is open from 12 to 8 p.m. from Monday to Friday and from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Call 631-7594 for inquiries.

Win fun, educational prizes in SM Supermarkets

IN CELEBRATION of SM Supermarkets' month-long Kids@Play theme, Universal Robina Corp. recently launched an exciting consumer promo dubbed Three-Point-Play Basketball Shootout. Ongoing for the whole month of September, shoppers who purchase participating URC products get to participate in the interactive game booth.

To join, just purchase any of the following URC products: Nissin Cup Noodles, Nissin's Ramen, Nissin's Yakisoba, Payless Instant Mami and Pancit Canton, Dewberry, Presto Creams, Choco Knots, Choco Pretzels, Magic Flakes, Cream-O, Clubhouse Mini, Berry Knots and Quake Cake, A purchase of P50 worth for GMA and Luzon and P40 for Visayas and Mindanao, gives the customer the chance to win major prizes if he or she succeeds in shooting three out of five attempts at the basketball game booth. Fun prizes such as drawing boards, creative puzzles, building blocks, doctor kits and chest sets await the lucky winners.

Promo runs from Sept. 5 to 30 at the 18 SM Malls nationwide.

Earn double Citibank Rewards points for your grocery shopping

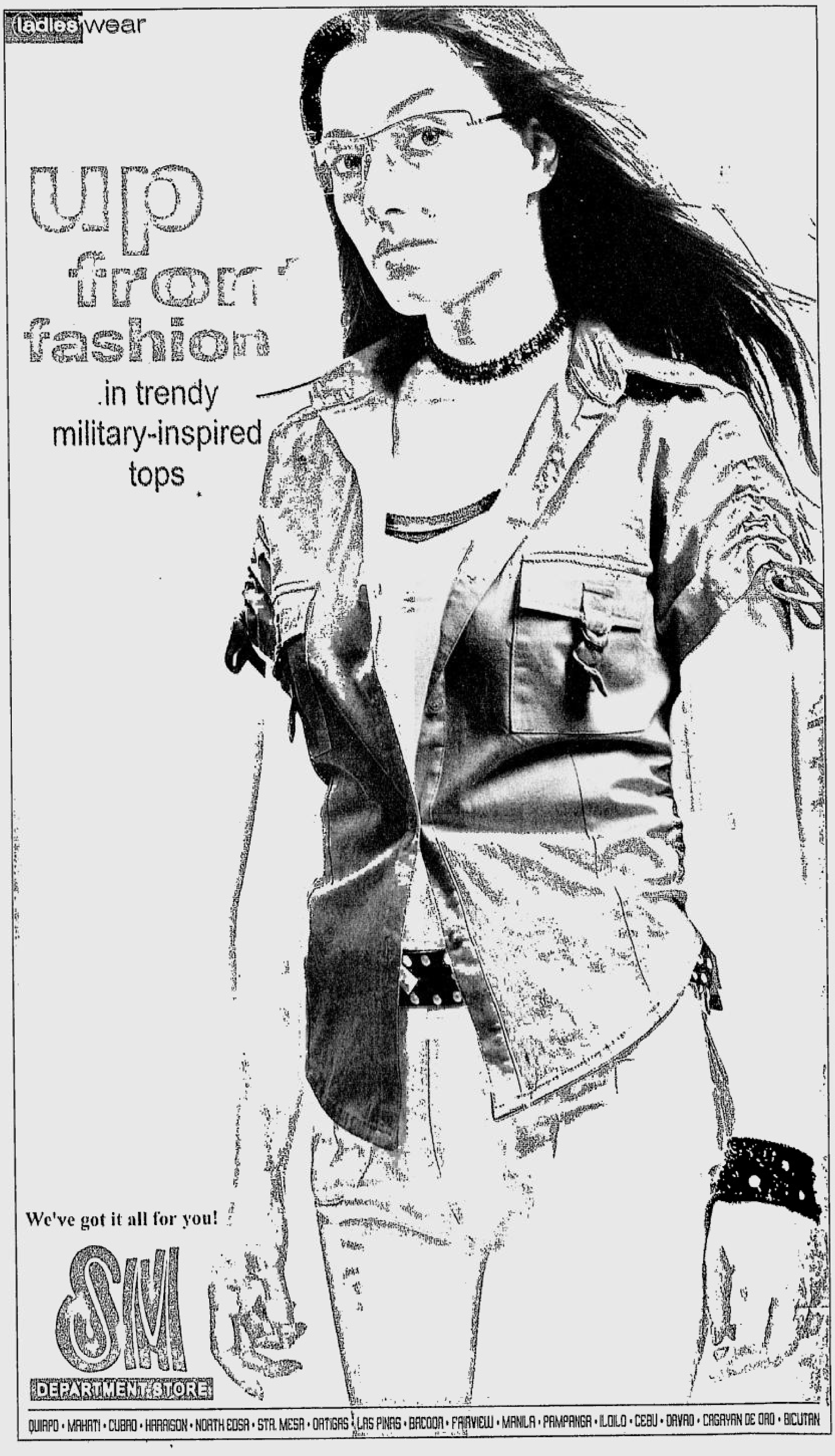
CITIBANK gives its cardholders another great reason to use their credit card for their shopping needs-including groceries. Until Sept. 28, simply charge your grocery shopping to your Citibank MasterCard or Visa and get the chance to earn double Rewards points.

Credit card purchases of at least P1,200 charged at Rustan, Big R and SM Supermarkets will earn Citibank cardmembers double Rewards points. For Citibank Silver and Gold MasterCard and Visa members, this limited offer will give you the chance of redeeming Rewards items from the new Citibank Rewards catalog at half the time.

Choose from a wide range of Rewards-including home appliances, home entertainment, sports gear, toys, outdoor equipment, power tools and personal accessories. You can also redeem Rewards points for gift certificates for popular restaurants, boutiques, even automotive services. To view these items, log on to www.citibank.com.ph.

Members of frequent flyer programs such as World Perks, Asia Miles, Kris Flyer and Royal Orchid Plus can also convert their Rewards points into frequent flyer miles to earn free trips and upgrades. You can also use your Rewards points to enjoy annual fee waivers.

The Citibank Rewards Program is a special feature of Citibank MasterCard and Visa. Under the program, you earn one Rewards point for every P30 spent using your Citibank credit card. The more you use your card, the more points you earn. For inquiries, call the 24-hour CitiPhone at 995-9999.



ladies wear
up front fashion
.in trendy military-inspired tops
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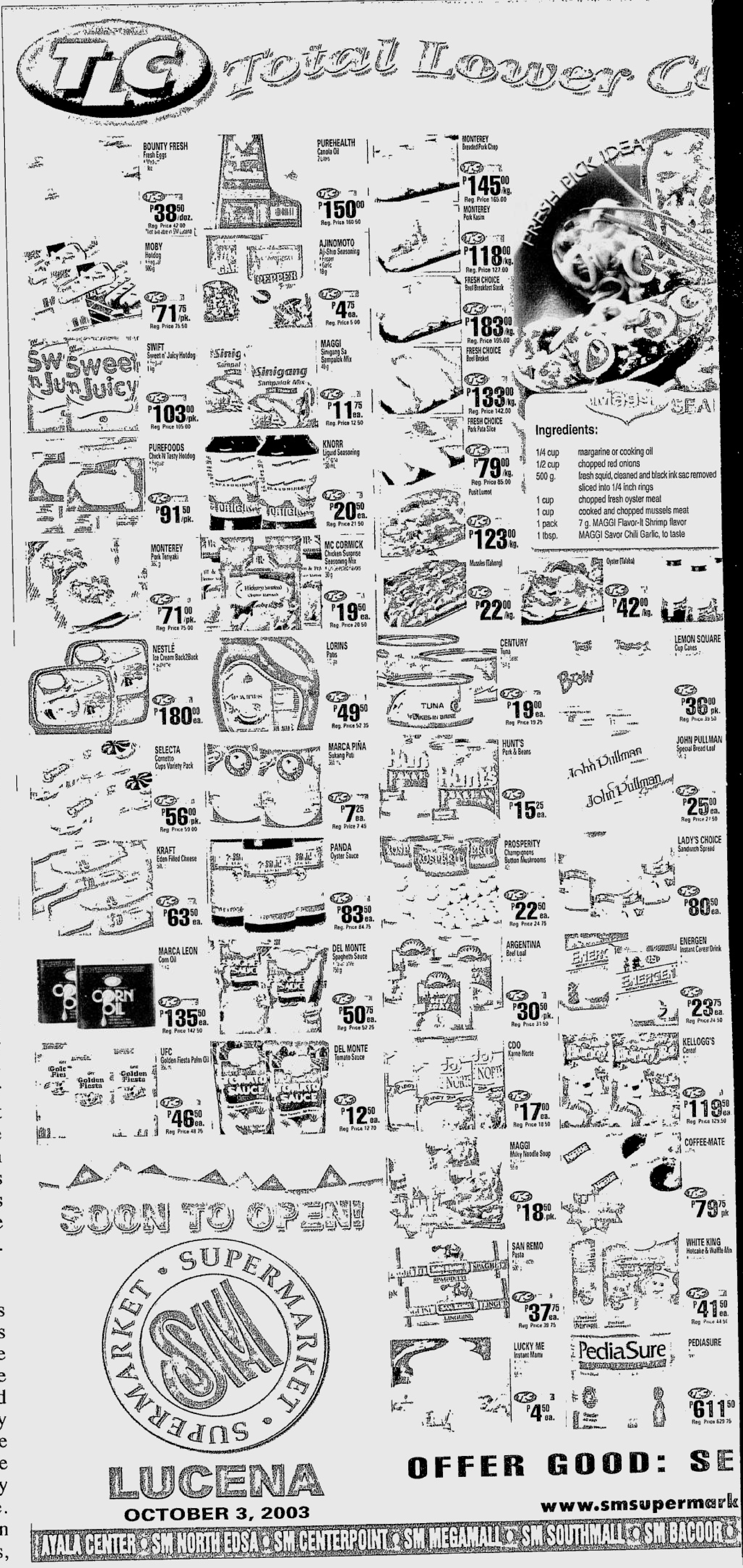
SM SUPERMARKET OPENS ITS 19TH STORE IN LUCENA

On October 3, 2003, SM Supermarket opens its doors to shoppers in Dalahican, Lucena City, Quezon. Now shoppers in Lucena can look forward to a great grocery shopping experience with its friendly, knowledgeable staff, cool, clean interiors, and 30 computerized checkouts for maximum shopping convenience.

Shoppers will be delighted with SM Supermarket's extensive range of grocery items; choice cuts from the meat and poultry sections; fresh produce from the fruits and vegetables sections; and the catch of the day from the seafood section.

Customers won't be able to resist buying SM Bonus products, the house brand known for being the smart alternative to quality consumer goods at consumer-friendly prices. Or customers can also opt to avail of the value packs where they can get SM Bonus items for free and save as much as 80% on the featured grocery items.

SM Supermarket is also known for its exciting in-store promotions. Come opening weekend (October 3 – 5), lucky shoppers will be treated to welcome gifts with every P500.00 purchase. Lucena customers can also win stand fans,



TLC Total Lower C

BOUNTY FRESH Fresh Eggs — P38.50/doz. Reg. Price 42.00

PUREHEALTH Canola Oil 2 Liters — P150.00 Reg. Price 160.50

MONTEREY Breaded Pork Chop — P145.00/kg. Reg. Price 165.00

MONTEREY Pork Kasim — P118.00/kg. Reg. Price 127.00

MOBY Hotdog 500g — P71.75/pk. Reg. Price 75.50

AJINOMOTO Aji-Shio Seasoning • Pepper • Garlic 18g — P4.75 ea. Reg. Price 5.00

FRESH CHOICE Beef Breakfast Steak — P183.00/kg. Reg. Price 195.00

SWIFT Sweet n' Juicy Hotdog 1kg — P103.00/pk. Reg. Price 105.00

MAGGI Sinigang Sa Sampalok Mix 40g — P11.75 ea. Reg. Price 12.50

FRESH CHOICE Beef Brisket — P133.00/kg. Reg. Price 142.00

PUREFOODS Chick'N Tasty Hotdog — P91.50/pk.

KNORR Liquid Seasoning 130mL — P20.50 ea. Reg. Price 21.50

FRESH CHOICE Pork Pata Slice — P79.00/kg. Reg. Price 85.00

Pusit Lumot — P123.00/kg.

MONTEREY Pork Teriyaki — P71.00/pk. Reg. Price 75.00

MC CORMICK Chicken Surprise Seasoning Mix 30g — P19.50 ea. Reg. Price 20.50

Mussles (Tahong) — P22.00/kg.

Oyster (Talaba) — P42.00/kg.

FRESH PICK IDEA

MAGGI SEA

Ingredients:

1/4 cup	margarine or cooking oil
1/2 cup	chopped red onions
500 g.	fresh squid, cleaned and black ink sac removed sliced into 1/4 inch rings
1 cup	chopped fresh oyster meat
1 cup	cooked and chopped mussels meat
1 pack	7 g. MAGGI Flavor-It Shrimp flavor
1 tbsp.	MAGGI Savor Chili Garlic, to taste

NESTLÉ Ice Cream Back2Back — P180.00 ea.

LORINS Patis — P49.50 Reg. Price 52.35

CENTURY Tuna — P19.00 ea. Reg. Price 19.25

LEMON SQUARE Cup Cakes — P36.00 pk. Reg. Price 39.50

SELECTA Cornetto Cups Variety Pack — P56.00/pk. Reg. Price 59.00

MARCA PIÑA Sukang Puti — P7.25 ea. Reg. Price 7.45

HUNT'S Pork & Beans — P15.25 ea.

JOHN PULLMAN Special Bread Loaf — P25.00 ea. Reg. Price 27.50

KRAFT Eden Filled Cheese — P63.50 ea.

PANDA Oyster Sauce — P83.50 ea. Reg. Price 84.75

PROSPERITY Champignons Button Mushrooms — P22.50 ea. Reg. Price 24.75

LADY'S CHOICE Sandwich Spread — P80.50 ea.

MARCA LEON Corn Oil — P135.50 ea. Reg. Price 142.50

DEL MONTE Spaghetti Sauce 750g — P50.75 ea. Reg. Price 52.25

ARGENTINA Beef Loaf — P30.50/pk. Reg. Price 31.50

ENERGEN Instant Cereal Drink — P23.75 ea. Reg. Price 24.50

UFC Golden Fiesta Palm Oil — P46.50 ea. Reg. Price 48.75

DEL MONTE Tomato Sauce — P12.50 ea. Reg. Price 12.70

CDO Karne Norte — P17.00 ea. Reg. Price 18.50

KELLOGG'S Cereal — P119.50 ea. Reg. Price 129.50

MAGGI Milky Noodle Soup 55g — P18.50 pk.

COFFEE-MATE — P79.75 pk

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SUPERMARKET SM SUPERMARKET

LUCENA

OCTOBER 3, 2003

SAN REMO Pasta — P37.75 ea. Reg. Price 39.75

WHITE KING Hotcake & Waffle Mix — P41.50 ea. Reg. Price 44.50

LUCKY ME Instant Mami — P4.50 ea.

PEDIASURE — P611.50 Reg. Price 629.75

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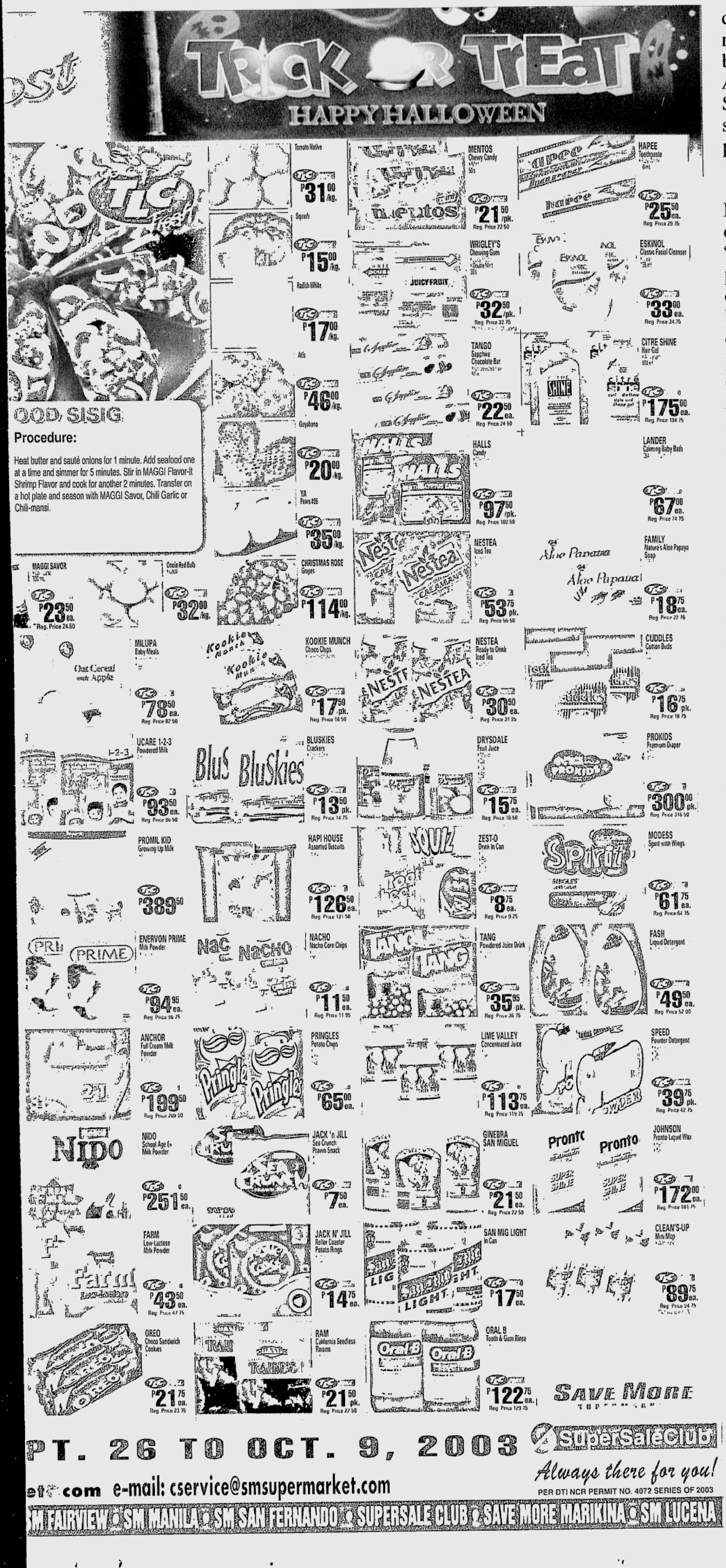

OOD, SISIG

Procedure:

Heat butter and sauté onions for 1 minute. Add seafood one at a time and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in MAGGI Flavor-It Shrimp Flavor and cook for another 2 minutes. Transfer on a hot plate and season with MAGGI Savor, Chili Garlic or Chili-mansi.

Tomato Native	P31.00/kg.	
Squash	P15.00/kg.	
Radish White	P17.00/kg.	
Atis	P46.00/kg.	
Guyabano	P20.00/kg.	
YA Pears #36	P35.00/kg.	
CHRISTMAS ROSE Grapes	P114.00/kg.	
MENTOS Chewy Candy 50s	P21.50/pk.	Reg. Price 22.50
WRIGLEY'S Chewing Gum Double Mint 30s	P32.50/pk.	Reg. Price 33.75
TANGO Sapphire Chocolate Bar	P22.50 ea.	Reg. Price 24.50
HALLS Candy	P97.50/pk.	Reg. Price 102.50
NESTEA Iced Tea	P53.75 pk.	Reg. Price 56.50
HAPEE Toothpaste	P25.50 ea.	Reg. Price 29.75
ESKINOL Classic Facial Cleanser	P33.00 ea.	Reg. Price 34.75
CITRE SHINE Hair Gel	P175.00 ea.	Reg. Price 194.75
LANDER Calming Baby Bath	P67.00 ea.	Reg. Price 74.75
FAMILY Nature's Aloe Papaya Soap	P18.75 ea.	Reg. Price 22.75
MAGGI SAVOR	P23.50 ea.	Reg. Price 24.50
Onion Red Bulb	P32.00/kg.	
MILUPA Baby Meals	P78.50 ea.	Reg. Price 82.50
KOOKIE MUNCH Choco Chips	P17.50 pk.	Reg. Price 18.50
NESTEA Ready to Drink Iced Tea	P30.50 ea.	Reg. Price 31.95
CUDDLES Cotton Buds	P16.75 pk.	Reg. Price 18.75
UCARE 1-2-3 Powdered Milk	P93.50 ea.	Reg. Price 96.50
BLUSKIES Crackers	P13.50 pk.	Reg. Price 14.75
DRYSDALE Fruit Juice	P15.75 ea.	Reg. Price 16.50
PROKIDS Premium Diaper	P300.00 pk.	Reg. Price 316.50
PROMIL KID Growing Up Milk	P389.50	
HAPI HOUSE Assorted Biscuits	P126.50 ea.	Reg. Price 131.50
ZEST-O Drink In Can	P8.75 ea.	Reg. Price 9.25
MODESS Sport with Wings	P61.75 ea.	Reg. Price 64.75
ENERVON PRIME Milk Powder	P94.95 ea.	Reg. Price 96.75
NACHO Nacho Corn Chips	P11.50 ea.	Reg. Price 11.95
TANG Powdered Juice Drink	P35.95 pk.	Reg. Price 36.75
FASH Liquid Detergent	P49.50 ea.	Reg. Price 52.00
ANCHOR Full Cream Milk Powder	P199.50	Reg. Price 209.50
PRINGLES Potato Chips	P65.00 ea.	
LIME VALLEY Concentrated Juice	P113.75 ea.	Reg. Price 119.75
SPEED Powder Detergent	P39.75 pk.	Reg. Price 42.75
NIDO School Age 6+ Milk Powder	P251.50 ea.	
JACK 'n JILL Sea Crunch Prawn Snack	P7.50 ea.	
GINEBRA SAN MIGUEL	P21.50 ea.	Reg. Price 22.50
JOHNSON Pronto Liquid Wax	P172.00 ea.	Reg. Price 181.75
FARM Low-Lactose Milk Powder	P43.50 ea.	Reg. Price 47.75
JACK N' JILL Roller Coaster Potato Rings	P14.75 ea.	
SAN MIG LIGHT In Can	P17.50 ea.	
CLEAN'S-UP Mini Mop	P89.75 ea.	Reg. Price 94.75
OREO Choco Sandwich Cookies	P21.75 ea.	Reg. Price 23.75
RAM California Seedless Raisins	P21.50 pk.	Reg. Price 27.50
ORAL B Tooth & Gum Rinse	P122.75 ea.	Reg. Price 129.75

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ceiling fans, sewing machines, and turbo broilers in "Manalo Araw-Araw!", SM Supermarket Lucena's special opening promo.

In addition, shoppers can also check out the "Value Collections" promo, where customers can earn bonus points with every P100.00 purchase and get a chance to avail of Anchor Hocking Kitchen Essentials at 50% off!

Other regular promotions include the Total Lower Cost (TLC) promo, where customers are given great discounts on grocery items and TLC Fresh, which gives customers fresh pick ideas on how to prepare food and enjoy big savings from the fresh sections.

Shoppers can also join the Bag-A-Bonus promo, which gives them a chance to avail of free SM Bonus goods with every P500.00 purchase including the selected featured items.

So come and visit SM Supermarket Lucena next Friday, October 3, 2003. Sm Supermarket Lucena is located at the ground floor of SM City Lucena, Dalahican corner Pagbilao National Road, Lucena City.

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ADV'T

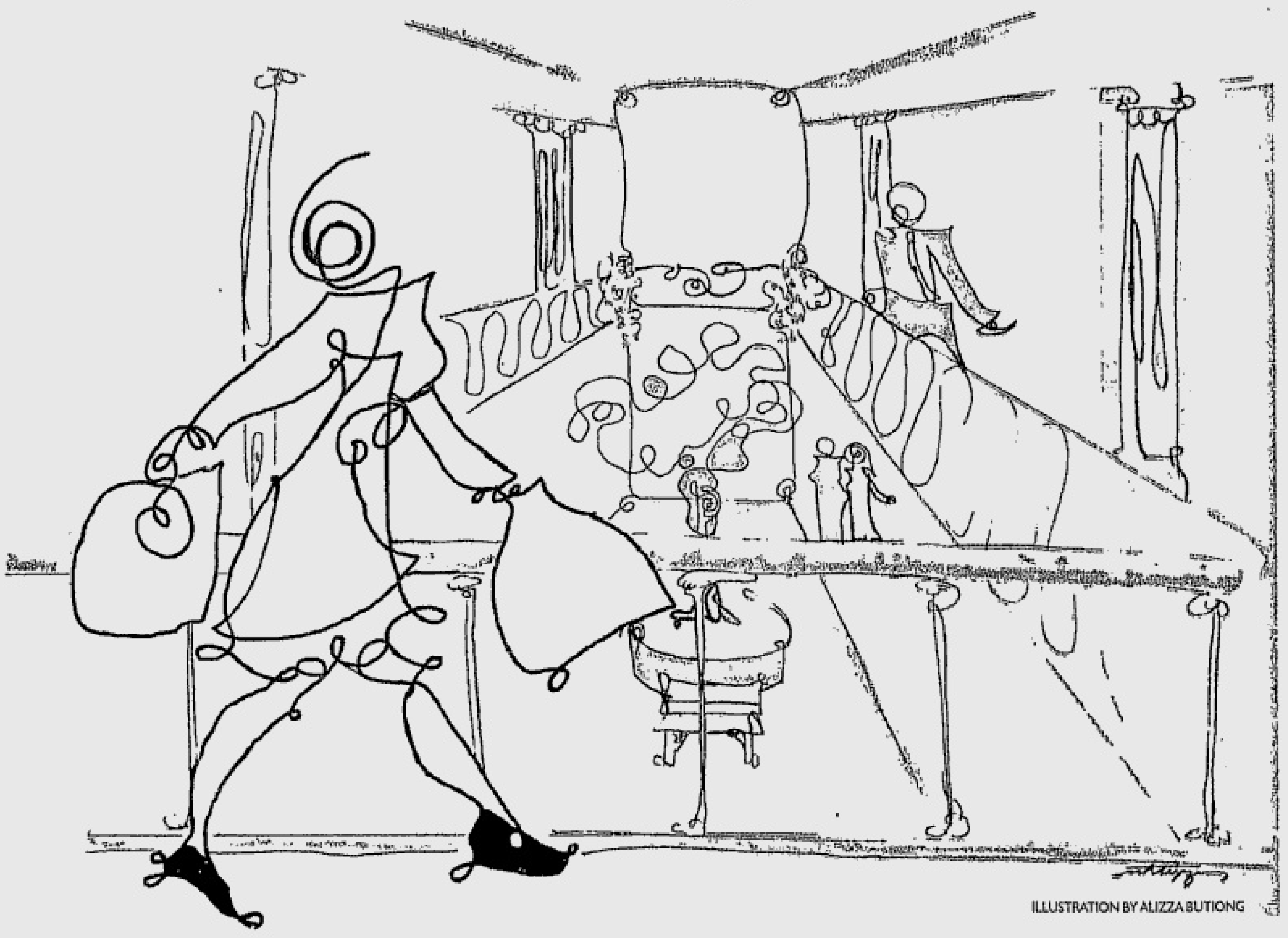


ILLUSTRATION BY ALIZZA BUTIONG

Affordable European furniture at Mega Accents

DO YOU want quality, exclusively designed but affordable European furniture and home decors? You can find them at Mega Accents Home Furnishings Inc (Mahfi), located just across Makati Cinema Square along Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) in Makati City.

A "one-stop-shop" for quality home furnishings, Mega Accents provides the answer to all your furniture needs with its wide array of custom-made French and Italian-designed as well as contemporary furniture.

Established in 1996 from the original company known as Mega Accents, Mahfi started in 1992 with its successful showroom as one of the pioneer establishments at the 4th level, Building B of the SM Megamall.

Its product lines range from a collection of living, dining, and bedroom showcases, chandeliers, lampshades, mirrors, frames, figurines, carpets and tapestries, vases, Mediterranean brass beds, gold inlaid furniture like china and vetrin tablets, center and side tables, commodes, buffet and console tables to assorted décor accessories that anyone would practically need to furnish his or her home or office-in style.

The showroom carries an impressive line of classic and finely crafted furniture such as Louie IV and Louie V living and dining room sets, huge but dainty-looking and elegant solid brass chandeliers imported from Egypt, Italy and Romania and exclusively designed with asfur crystals, colorful and exquisitely crafted Egyptian and Belgian tapestries and carpets, tastefully chosen Italian paintings, adorable crystal figurines, Mona Lisa living and dining room set masterpieces, and more.

Mahfi entered into a joint venture agreement in 1997 with one of the largest manufacturer of hand-made furniture in the Middle East, the Elserfy Furniture Manufacturing Inc (Efmi), founded in 1929 and based in Cairo, Egypt.

The agreement guaranteed for Mahfi and its clients that when it comes to furniture, the design and materials are exclusive, made of solid wood (elderwood) and 100-percent handmade.

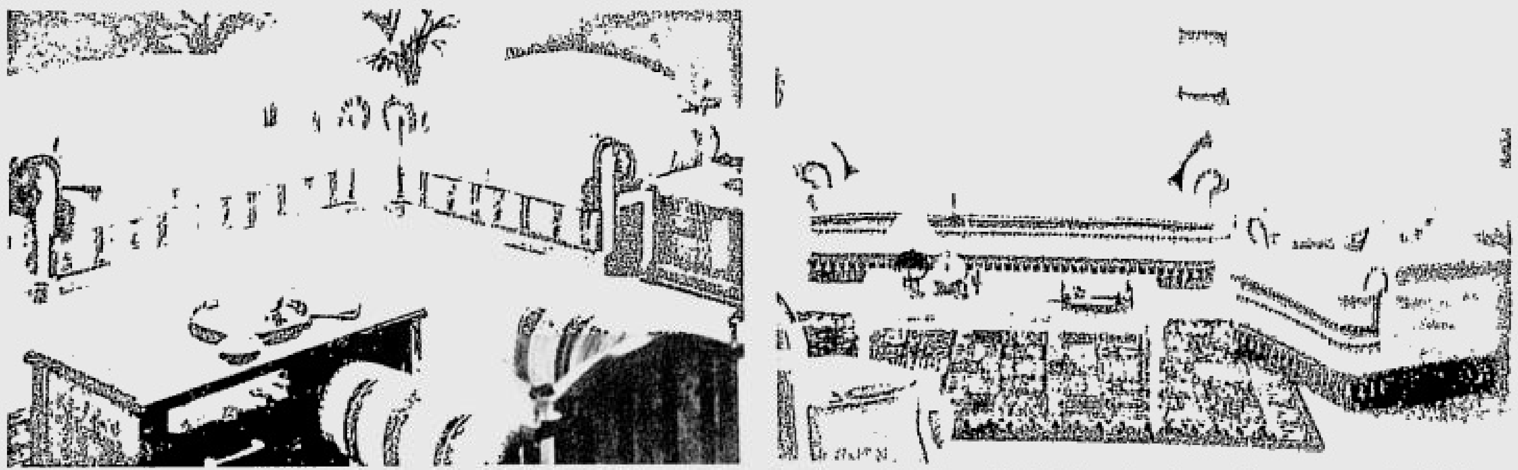
For its clients' convenience, Mega Accents is the only furniture company in the country that carries its own catalogue (which it changes every four years), since it has its own manufacturer abroad, while others carry only the catalogue of the products they represent.

Customers can name their price for the product they want and can likewise design their own payment scheme, based on their capability to pay, with no interest at all and can also be company-financed. Flexible and easy, these packages readily accommodate clients' requests for discounts, even offering them the lay-away plan for up to 12 months, again at 0 percent.

It also offers free designer services, free delivery and free trial set-up.

Up to the end of September, when customers purchase a bedroom, a living room or dining set, they are given a 40 percent discount and either a free Belgian or Turkish carpet, a 20-inch remote-controlled color TV, a chandelier or pedestal flower vase.

Visit Mega Accents Home Furnishings' showrooms at Makati City, at 471 Alabang-Zapote Road, Almanza 1, Las Piñas City (across SM Southmall) or at the 4th level of Building B, SM Megamall. Call 843-4036, 633-1642, 805-0253 or 55 and 805-0191 or 98.



ARTISTICO (left) and Travera sala sets. Shown are two of the exclusively designed, hand-made and finely crafted European furniture offered at Mahfi. These furniture pieces are made of Italian fabric, solid wood and brass, built-to-last and affordable.

Toys to grow up with unveiled at Ban Kee Tradeshow

GONE are the days when a play toy performed a very simple and ordinary role in a child's young life; an inanimate keepsake to keep him constantly entertained and busy while the father is away in the workplace and the mother is occupied with domestic chores at home.

The rapid pace of modernization has transformed altogether the concept of leisure and recreation for today's generation of young kids that playthings have ceased to be traditional objects of entertainment among them.

In the new millennium, the new type of toys not only serve as a tool for entertainment for toddlers but also assume the inspiring role of a partner in the child's mental and physical development.

Whether by accident or design on the part of the inventor or manufacturer, the new models and make of toys feature ultra model designs and high-tech gadgets whose function and operations appeal to the children brought up in the age of cyberspace.

Select toy retailers from all over the Philippines got an exclusive peek into the new generation of toys during the annual trade show sponsored by Ban Kee Trading Inc, a leading importer of most of the world's known and most popular toy brands Sept. 4 at the Garden Ballroom of the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, 1 Garden Way, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

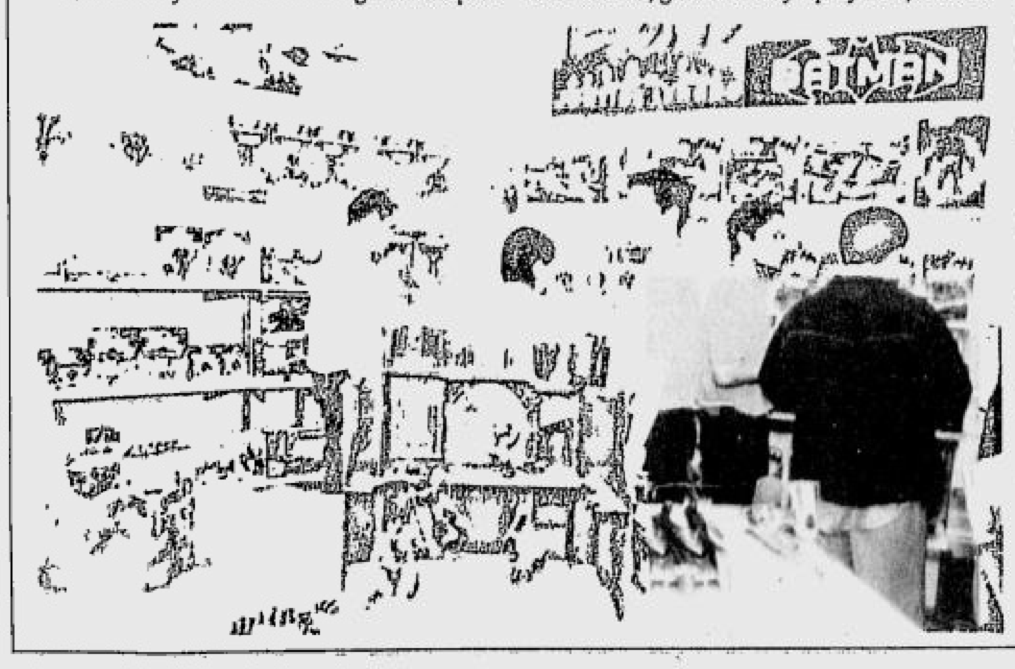
The annual trade show event showcased all kinds of quality products, ranging from juvenile accessories, pre-school and infant toys, robots, miniature cars, remote-controlled cars, girls and boys' play sets, fashion dolls, collectible figures, trading cards and assorted gifts.

Among the new brands showcased during the trade show were He-Man, Yugioh, Justice League and Power Rangers.

Also on display were perennial bestsellers Zoids, Gundam, Bratz, 2002 Toy of the Year Awardee Crush Gear, Digimon, Beyblade, Disney Princess, Kim Possible, Totally Spies, Graco, Blues Clues and Dora the Explorer.

Among the major international manufacturers represented were Mattel, Tomy, Bandai, Takara, MGA International and Intex.

The one-day exhibit, which served as a preview of Ban Kee's 2003-2004 collection of toy items, drew the attendance of all its major retailers from all over the country. Also on hand for the occasion were top executives from the marketing and advertising industry as well as media representatives.



Among the new brands showcased during the trade show were He-Man, Yugioh, Justice League and Power Rangers

Shop at 'Home'

DEMANDING consumers who want to buy top-of-the-line home appliance and furnishing should visit the Abenson-Greenhills showroom to experience shopping in a setting like a family den or a living room. Abenson-Greenhills is the first showroom of Abenson, the company known as the largest appliance store network in the country, to be built and styled around the "A concept."

"The 'A concept' used in Abenson-Greenhills enables finicky customers to choose conveniently from the latest lineup of audio-video and home appliance," said Roel dela Vega, manager of Abenson Greenhills.

"Under the 'A concept', stocks are automatically changed or updated as soon as the latest model of a particular brand that Abenson carries is released in the market," Dela Vega said.

"The 'A concept' is cutting-edge because stocks are displayed in such a manner that customers can easily enjoy and try a product as if they were inside their homes. They can sit on cushioned chairs, listen to music blaring from an audio-video component, or watch shows flashed on wide-screen television sets," Dela Vega said. The atmosphere in Abenson-Greenhills showroom feels like home, a corner of the showroom will have a Playstation where children can play while their parents look at the latest products.

Another innovation introduced in Abenson-Greenhills showroom is Homeplus in the second floor. Homeplus is a division of Abenson which markets home and office furnishing.

Abenson-Greenhills has a fine selection of high-end television sets featuring plasma, liquid crystal display (LCD), and projection TV, and state-of-the art audio-video systems from Sony, Samsung, JVC, Philips. It also carries stylish and functional furniture from Homeplus.

Shopwise searches for first Familya Fashionista

HAVE you ever dreamed of being a fashion model? This September, Shopwise Supercenters dares you and your family to strut your sassiest best at its first-ever Family Fashion Showdown, and experience all the glitz and glamour of being a fashion model.

From Sept. 5 to Oct. 5, a minimum purchase worth P1,500 made in the Fashion Departments of any Shopwise branch entitles a customer to join the search for Familya Fashionista.

Interested participants can fill out application forms at the designated registration booths. Each family must comprise of four members, including one adult male, one adult female and two children between the ages 5 to 18 years old. They must also submit individual 5"x7" full-body colored pictures together with the accomplished application form. Deadline for submission of entries is on or before 8 p.m. of Sept. 30.

A total of 10 finalists will be selected to perform in a live family fashion showdown, directed by the legendary Fritz Ynfante, at the Festival Supermall, on Oct. 19. The winning family will walk away with P100,000 in cash and a brand new wardrobe. Non-winning participants will be entitled to keep the clothes that they will model during the family fashion showdown.

So if you think you've got the look, express yourself and register at your nearest Shopwise branch. Shopwise is located at the Festival Supermall, Alabang; Pasong Tamo, Makati and Libis, Quezon City.

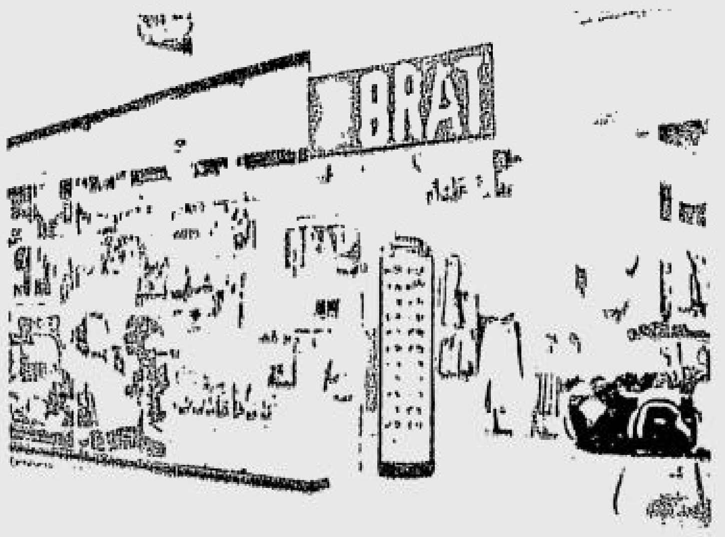
Home of The North Face

MOUNTAIN climbers and serious outdoor adventurers who seek stylish looks, durability, and design technology offered by the world-famous brand The North Face can now troop to any Bratpack store located nationwide and check out the latest authentic The North Face outdoor apparel, gear and equipment offered.

The North Face brand has been known worldwide and preferred by most mountaineers, trekkers and climbers. Over the past 35 years, it has established for itself a reputation for introducing cutting-edge designs, technological innovation and durability.

Climbers of international caliber who have been known to use The North Face in their successful climbs and expeditions include seven-time Mt. Everest conqueror Pete Athans, British adventure rock climber Mick Fowler and extreme crack and sport climber Lisa Gnade.

Now, Filipino mountaineers and outdoor enthusiasts can begin their quest to conquer the highest peaks and most challenging terrains by gearing themselves up with authentic The North Face outdoor apparel, gear and equipment found in Bratpack stores located at SM City North Edsa, SM Manila, Southmall, Sm City Pampanga, SM City Davao, SM Cagayan, Robinsons Place Ermita, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Bacolod, and Robinsons Iloilo.



A birthday fun-tasy at Storyland

MAKE your child's birthday fantasy come true with Storyland's "funtastic" party packages. At Storyland, the country's most exciting indoor theme park, the key word is fun. And each Storyland party package is packed with tons of fun, surprises and adventure.

Your child is the star as Storyland introduces a unique new way to make your child's birthday a hit. You and your child can choose from one of Storyland's party themes featuring Ellie the Elephant and Lionel the Lion King, as well as other well-loved characters. Party packages for 40 to 100 guests range from P8,000 to P20,000.

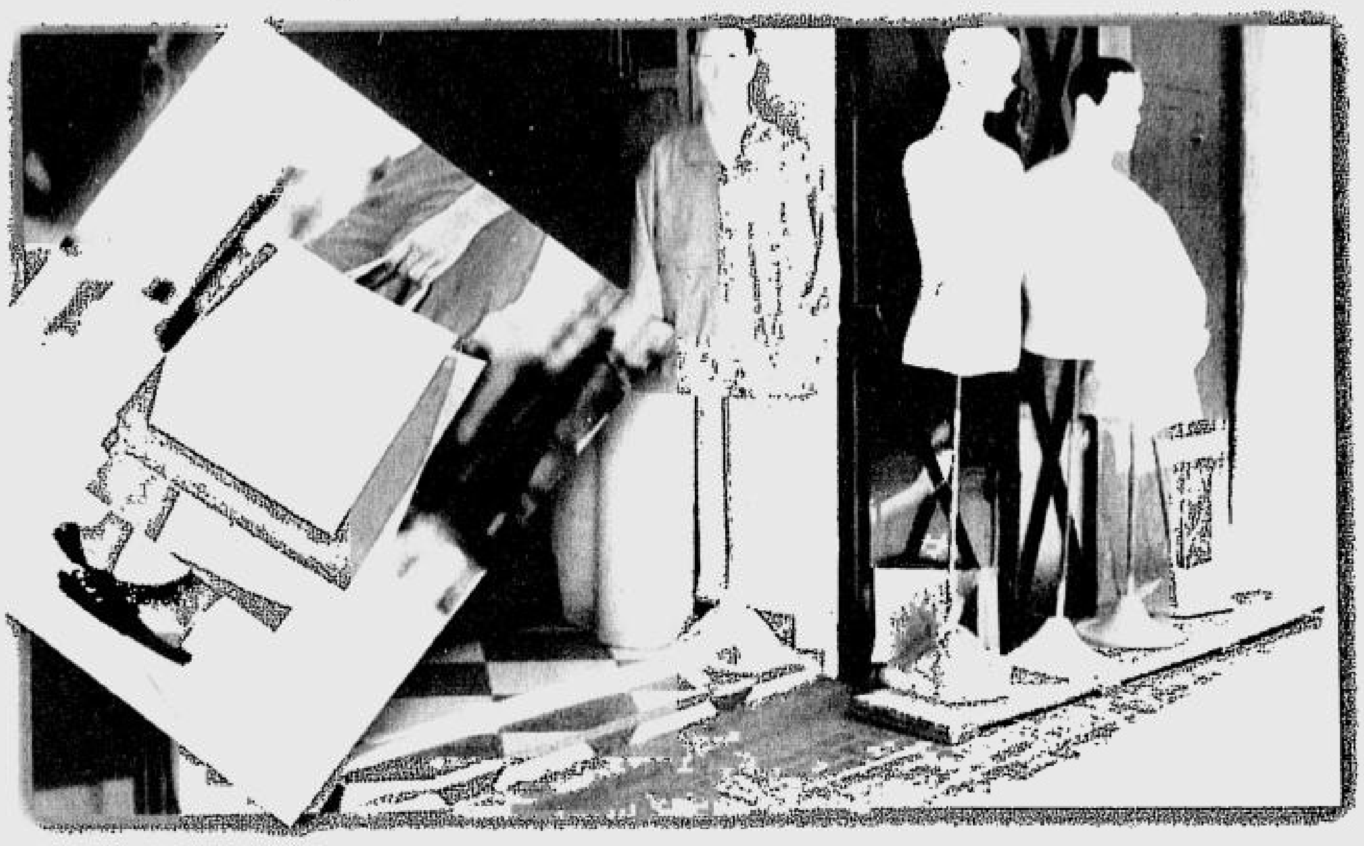
Just say 'action' and Storyland's experienced celebration specialists will do the rest. Celebration specialists will assist parents in planning every detail from the theme of the party to the menu (like Burger King, Goldilocks, Jollibee, Kenny Rogers, Racks, Shakeys, Texas Chicken and Yoshinoya) to party pluses like cotton candy and popcorn to fun and games. Other party perks to choose from include a spellbinding show, a face painting activity, an acrobat show and an animal show.

Storyland's fun-filled birthday party is made even more magical with Storyland's glow in the dark Celebration Halls featuring glow in the dark murals of balloons, cakes and streamers.

The best part is that Storyland parties are designed with one goal in mind, fun. Each two-hour party is packed with fun, and ride-all-you-can wrist tags for unlimited fun on the park's rides and attractions.

All packages come complete with kiddie party essentials - themed party invitations, name tags, hat, horns, tray-liners, balloons and even a pabitin. Celebrants will be feted with a magical birthday ceremony with Storyland characters, as well as a special birthday cake and surprise gift from the Storyland family.

Make your child's birthday fun-tasy come true at Storyland. Call your Storyland celebration specialist today at Storyland SM Southmall at 800-0614 or 800-3202; and at Storyland SM City Fairview at 936-0508 or 939-6531.



Big R Supercenter in motion

BIG R Supercenter, the pioneer in the hypermart business, once again sets in motion the wheels of expansion this year, with the opening of their 6th store, Big R Supercenter Dasmariñas. Conveniently located along Aguinaldo Highway, right across Pala-pala Junction, it will surely be very accessible to many. "We believe that Cavite is a good marketplace, which is why we are once again putting up a full-fledged mall to serve the Cavitenos. This time though, our mall will have something new to offer in the form of the dynamic retail concept that is Big R Supercenter." Irving Wu, director for operations shares. "A supercenter is a new retail innovation that Big R pioneered here in the country, way back in December 2000. The basic idea is for it to be a one-stop shop. Just imagine a store that spans some 11,000 sqm, where one could find everything he or she needs, from a can of peas to a complete home entertainment center! In other words, Big R will surely have everything one could ever think of." Wu explains with a smile. Big R houses a supermarket that has a wide assortment of groceries at low prices. They have also recently developed a baby solution center called "Baby lanes", for all baby needs. "We study retail trends, and constantly embark on innovations that we are confident will serve our customer better." Wu shares. Big R also has the cleanest and most complete fresh market, and carries an expansive line of general merchandise, apparel, and appliances. "We have also introduced a new concept, which is Prepared Food, where customers can choose from a variety of home-style dishes for take out, from our roasting bay and ready-to-cook bay, and compliment them with breads, cakes, and pastries from the bakery. " Wu furthers.

Pricing strategy

Furthermore, with at the string of socio-economic challenges the Filipino consumers have had to and continue to face, price is definitely an object to most, if not to all. "We have developed a pricing strategy that is uniquely ours, which allows us to pass on a lot of savings to the customers. It is our trade secret." Wu shares. Big R also offers both retail and wholesale. "Big R however, remains to be dominantly retail, however as part of our program to grow our wholesale business, we recently launched the Super Sulit Customer Loyalty Program, wherein customers could get discounts and exciting rewards for their purchases." Wu furthers. "We want to give customers more chances to save money."

"We all know that buying is a necessity. It is the retail industry's reason for being. A retail innovation of such proportions as Big R, will go to waste if the opportunity to shop there is open to but a few, Big R knew this from the start, and added a "no membership" policy to the long list of consumer benefits. They have also introduced longer shopping hours, from 7:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. so that more people could avail themselves of such unique experience.

Big R is not only the pioneer, in the hypermart business, it also the leader in expansion. Aside from Big R Dasmariñas, adding to the chain of stores by year end will be Big Supercenter Lipa, Cainta Junction and Dagupan. "The Big R team works very hard to give our customers the best shopping experience possible. We always abide by our corporate mission to be the low-priced provider of high quality products, that is why we do not just constantly endeavor to give customers more reasons to go to our stores, we also bring our stores to where they are, so that more people can enjoy this great shopping experience." Wu proudly concludes.

big R Supercenter

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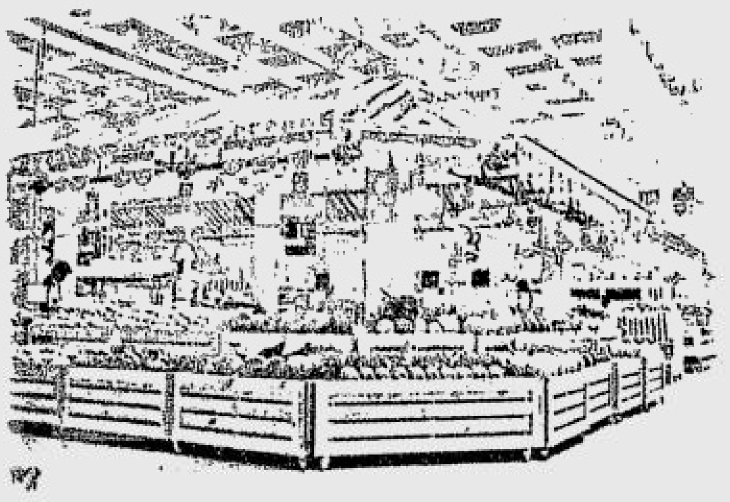

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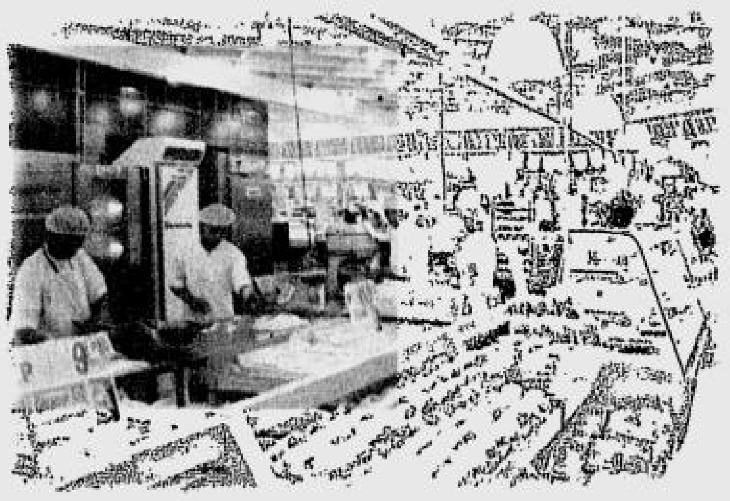

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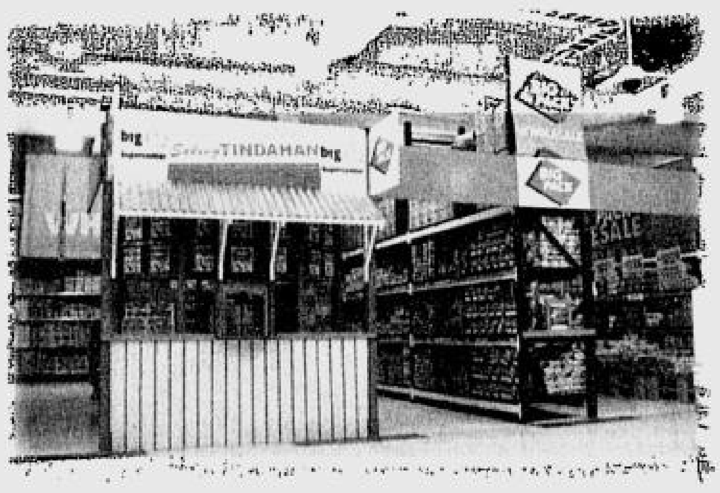

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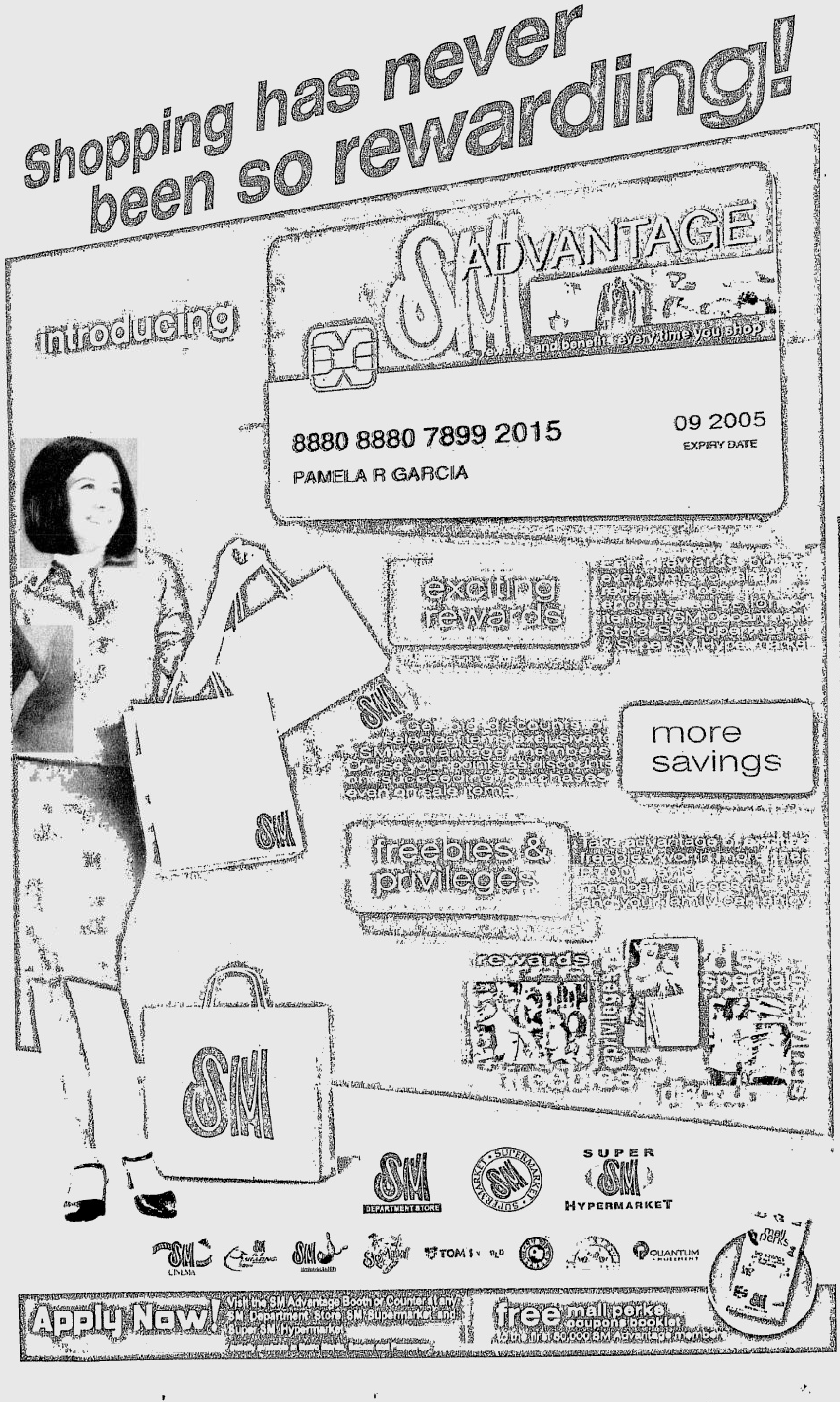
SM CITY BICUTAN WINNERS

The four winners of the recently concluded Shop and Win raffle promo, conducted by SM City Bicutan pose with mall officials during the awarding of four brand-new Suzuki Jimny 4X4. From left: Joselito Gatdula, Teresita Hernandez, representative of winner Ma. Amparo 'Ampee' Matignas, Myrna Andres, SM City Bicutan mall manager Mary Ann King who presided over the awarding ceremonies, assistant mall managers Julian Galvez and Eric Uy.

GSC OFFERS AID TO MOWELFUND

Greenhills Shopping Center, one of the country's centers of recreation and entertainment formally donated an amount to the Mowelfund, coinciding with the latter's celebration of its 29th year of servicing the needs of the less fortunate workers of the Philippine motion picture industry. Formally turning over the amount to (3rd from left) actress and Mowelfund executive director Boots Anson Roa and Mowelfund comptroller Julius Topacio are (from left) Greenhills Shopping Center's marketing and special leasing manager Carlotta Soller and its general manger Joey Santos.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Expos for OFWs at Starmall

TWO must-see expositions for the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and small and medium entrepreneurs (SMEs) as well as their families are slated on Sept. 26 to 30 at the Trade and Concert Halls of Starmall, Edsa corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City, it was announced by the Pamilyang OFWs-SMEs Network Foundation Inc. (POFW-SMENFI).

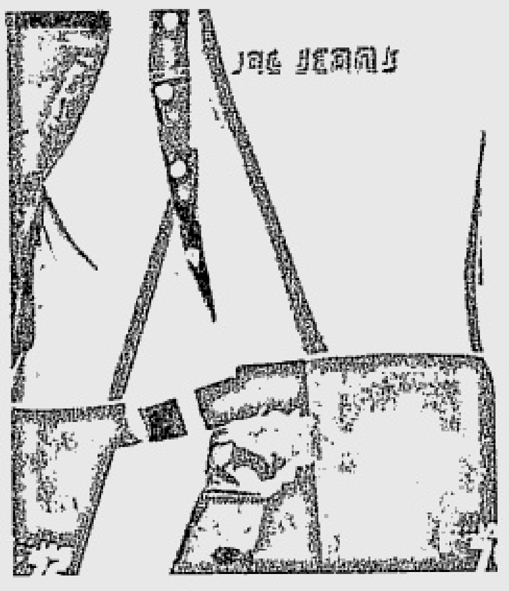
Dubbed Filipino Seafarers Family Trade Fair 2003 and Pamilyang OFWs-SMEs Job, Livelihood and Investment Expo 2003, the events organized by POFW-SMENFI (tel. nos. 912-5803 and 437-1660) are aimed at empowering the OFW and SME families through information, opportunities and benefits.

POFW-SMENFI president George Arriola said the events are also aimed at making the families of the OFWs and SMEs productive by giving them the latest information on the job and livelihood opportunities being offered by the government and private sectors.

POFW-SMENFI marketing officer Emy Aguinaldo said the back-to-back exhibitions are part of a series of monthly thematic events at the Starmall this year. It will keep the 8 million OFW families informed of where to best invest their hard-earned money and also help in their transformation into SMEs. The OFW families are the recipients of an estimated US$10 billion in remittances yearly.

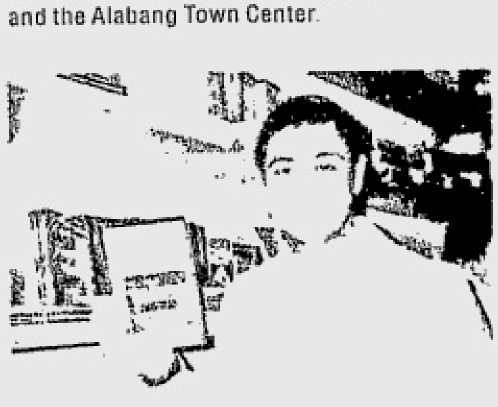
Recent data from the National Statistics Office revealed that the remittances from OFWs, which includes US$1.4 billion from 205,000 seafarers on various international ships, are not only the driving force behind consumer spending but it also spurred the development of micro-businesses that now account for over 90 percent of all businesses in the country.

Both events which are in line with the proclamation of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Year of the Families (March 2003 to February 2004), the National Seafarers' Day on Sept. 30 and the National Maritime Week this month are being promoted in the "Pamilyang OFWs-SMEs News Bureau" which is broadcast every Saturday on DZRJ 810 AM (9:00 to 10:00 a.m.) and Kabayan Radio (1:00 to 2:00 p.m.). The Kabayan program is heard in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macau, Shanghai and in other parts of the country through cable stations.



Jag Jeans' bag promo

GET ready for the hottest shopping deal with Jag Jeans' Bag Your Denim promo. For every purchase of Jag pants or denim jacket, you get a free denim sling bag. The trendy Jag denim bag is perfect to complete your favorite Jag Jeans getup and can be used for any occasion - for school, at the mall, during your weekend night-outs or even at casual parties. So hurry and shop at any Jag Jeans boutique to get the limited denim bag for free. Promo runs until Sept. 26. Jag Jeans is available at all SM Department Stores, Robinsons Malls, Isetann, Ever and at The Landmark, Sta. Lucia East, All Mall, Farmer's Plaza, Fairmart Cubao, Glorietta 1, Jaka Plaza and the Alabang Town Center.



THE MASTER'S LIBRARY OPENS THIRD BRANCH

The Master's Library, owned by couples Gary anc Angeli Pangilinan-Valenciano and Anthony and Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan, is an alternative source of literature specializing on Christian, family, parenting and inspirational titles. It recently opened its third branch in Ermita, Manila. Shown in phot is parenting advocate and The Master's Library owner, Anthony Pangilinan, giving a thumbs up during The Master's Library branch opening in Manila.